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ESSAY I.

OF THE

NATURE OF THE EMOTIONS

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ON THE

NATURE AND PRINCIPLES

OF

TASTE.

BY

THE REVD. ARCHIBALD ALISON,
LL. B. F. R. S. EDIN.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR MESSRS. P. BYRNE, J. MOORE,
GRUEBER AND M'ALLISTER, W. JONES,
AND R. WHITE.

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TO

WILLIAM PULTENEY, Esq.

THESE

ESSAYS

ARE INSCRIBED;

IN TESTIMONY

OF THE RESPECT AND GRATITUDE

OF THE

AUTHOR.

Edinburgh,
Nov. 22, 1789.

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OF THE NATURE OF THE EMOTIONS OF SUBLIMITY AND BEAUTY.

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INTRODUCTION.

TASTE is that Faculty of the human Mind, by which we perceive and enjoy, whatever is BEAUTIFUL or SUBLIME in the works of Nature or Art.

The perception of theſe Qualities is attended with an Emotion of Pleaſure, very diſtinguiſhable from every other pleaſure of our Nature, and which is accordingly diſtinguiſhed by the name of the EMOTION of TASTE. The diſtinction of the objects of Taſte into the Sublime and the Beautiful, has produced a ſimilar diviſion of this Emotion, into the EMOTION of SUBLIMITY, and the EMOTION of BEAUTY.

The Qualities that produce theſe Emotions, are to be found in almoſt every claſs of the objects of human knowledge, and the Emotions themſelves afford one of the moſt extenſive ſources of human delight. They occur to us, amid every variety of EXTERNAL SCENERY, and among many diverſities of diſpoſition and affection in the MIND of Man. The moſt pleaſing Arts of human invention are altogether directed to their purſuit: and even the neceſſary Arts are exalted into dignity, by the Genius that can unite Beauty with Uſe. From the earlieſt period of Society, to its laſt ſtage of improvement, they afford an innocent and elegant amuſe-

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ment to private life, at the ſame time that they increaſe the Splendour of National Character; and in the progreſs of Nations, as well as of Individuals, while they attract attention from the pleaſures they beſtow, they ſerve to exalt the human Mind, from corporeal to intellectual purſuits.

Theſe Qualities, however, though ſo important to human happineſs, are not the objects of immediate obſervation; and in the attempt to inveſtigate them, various circumſtances unite to perplex our reſearch. They are often obſcured under the number of qualities with which they are accidentally combined: They reſult often from peculiar combinations of the qualities of objects, or the relation of certain parts of objects to each other: They are ſtill oftner, perhaps, dependent upon the ſtate of our own minds, and vary in their effects with the diſpoſitions in which they happen to be obſerved. In all caſes, while we feel the Emotions they excite, we are ignorant of the cauſes by which they are produced; and when we ſeek to diſcover them, we have no other method of diſcovery, than that varied and patient EXPERIMENT, by which, amid theſe complicated circumſtances, we may gradually aſcertain the peculiar qualities which, by the CONSTITUTION of our NATURE, are permanently connected with the Emotions we feel.

In the employment of this mode of Inveſtigation, there are two great objects of attention and inquiry, which ſeem to include all that is either neceſſary,

neceſſary, or perhaps poſſible, for us to diſcover on the ſubject of Taſte.

Theſe objects are,

I. To inveſtigate the NATURE of thoſe QUALITIES that produce the Emotions of TASTE: And,

II. To inveſtigate the NATURE of that FACULTY, by which theſe Emotions are received.

Theſe inveſtigations, however, are not to be conſidered only as objects of philoſophical curioſity. They have an immediate relation to all the Arts that are directed to the production either of the BEAUTIFUL or the SUBLIME; and they afford the only means by which the principles of theſe various Arts can be aſcertained. Without a juſt and accurate conception of the Nature of theſe Qualities, the ARTIST muſt be unable to determine, whether the Beauty he creates is temporary or permanent, whether adapted to the accidental prejudices of his Age, or to the uniform conſtitution of the human Mind; and whatever the Science of CRITICISM can afford for the improvement or correction of Taſte, muſt altogether depend upon the previous knowledge of the Nature and Laws of this Faculty.

To both theſe Inquiries, however, there is a preliminary inveſtigation, which ſeems abſolutely neceſſary, and without which every concluſion we form, muſt be either imperfect or vague. In the inveſtigation of CAUSES, the firſt and moſt important

important ſtep, is the accurate examination of the EFFECT to be explained. In the Science of Mind, however, as well as in that of Body, there are few effects altogether ſimple, or in which accidental circumſtances are not combined with the proper effect. Unleſs, therefore, by means of repeated Experiments, ſuch accidental circumſtances are accurately diſtinguiſhed from the phenomena that permanently characteriſe the effect, we are under the neceſſity of including in the Cauſe, the cauſes alſo of all the accidental circumſtances with which the effect is accompanied.

With the Emotions of TASTE, in almoſt every inſtance, many other accidental Emotions of Pleaſure are united: the various ſimple pleaſures that ariſe from other qualities of the object; the pleaſure of agreeable Senſation; in the caſe of Material objects; and in all, that pleaſure which by the Conſtitution of our Nature is annexed to the Exerciſe of our Faculties. Unleſs therefore we have previouſly acquired a diſtinct and accurate conception of that peculiar effect which is produced on our Minds, when the Emotions of Taſte are felt, and can preciſely diſtinguiſh it from the effects that are produced by theſe accidental Qualities, we muſt neceſſarily include in the Cauſes of ſuch Emotions, thoſe Qualities alſo, which are the cauſes of the accidental pleaſures with which this Emotion is accompanied. The variety of Syſtems that Philoſophers have adopted upon this ſubject, and the various Emotions into which they have reſolved the Emotion of Taſte, while the afford a ſufficient evidence of the numerous

merous accidental pleaſures that accompany theſe Emotions, afford alſo a ſtrong illuſtration of the neceſſity of previouſly aſcertaining the Nature of this Effect, before we attempt to inveſtigate its Cauſe. With regard, therefore, to both theſe inquiries, the firſt and moſt important ſtep is accurately to examine the Nature of this EMOTION itſelf, and its diſtinction from every other Emotion of Pleaſure; and our capacity of diſcovering either the Nature of the Qualities that produce the Emotions of Taſte, or the Nature of the Faculty by which they are received, will be exactly proportioned to our accuracy in aſcertaining the Nature of the Emotion itſelf.

In this view of the ſubject, a work intended as an INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND PRINCIPLES OF TASTE, may naturally be ſuppoſed to conſiſt of the following PARTS, and to be conducted in the following MANNER:

I. THE FIRST PART would contain an ANALYSIS or EXAMINATION of that EFFECT which is produced on the MIND, when theſe EMOTIONS are felt; and of their DISTINCTION from the SIMPLE EMOTIONS of PLEASURE.

II. THE SECOND PART would contain an INVESTIGATION of the NATURE of the QUALITIES that are fitted by the Conſtitution of our Nature to produce theſe EMOTIONS; and of their DISTINCTION from the QUALITIES that are productive only of the SIMPLE EMOTIONS of PLEASURE.

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In this part of the ſubject, there are two ſubordinate Inquiries, that would naturally demand attention.

1. The Qualities of Sublimity and Beauty, are diſcovered not only in pleaſing or agreeable objects, but frequently alſo in objects that in themſelves are productive of PAIN; and ſome of the greateſt Compoſitions of the Fine Arts are founded upon the ſubjects of TERROR or DISTRESS. It would form, therefore, an obvious and important Inquiry, to aſcertain by what Means this ſingular Effect is produced in REAL NATURE, and by what Means it may be produced in the Compoſitions of ART.

2. There is a DISTINCTION in the Effects produced on our Minds by objects of Taſte; and this diſtinction both in the EMOTIONS and in their CAUSES has been expreſſed by the terms of SUBLIMITY and BEAUTY. It would form, therefore, a ſecond object of INQUIRY, to aſcertain THE NATURE OF THIS DISTINCTION, both with regard to theſe EMOTIONS, and the QUALITIES that produce them.

III. THE THIRD PART of ſuch a work would contain an INVESTIGATION of the NATURE of that FACULTY by which theſe Emotions are received: And the purſuit of it would naturally lead to the important Inquiry, Whether there is any STANDARD by which the Perfection and Imperfection of this Faculty may be determined? and to the illuſtration of the MEANS by which it may be either corrected or improved.

Such

Such are the objects which it ſeems to me moſt important to aſcertain in the PHILOSOPHY of TASTE; and ſuch is the method in which theſe ESSAYS towards this Inquiry have been conducted. But when I conſider both the extent and the difficulty of ſuch an Inveſtigation, and recollect the Errors into which many great Men have fallen upon theſe ſubjects, I can only find reſolution to preſent the FIRST PART of my Inquiries to the Public.

ESSAY

ESSAY I.

OF THE NATURE OF THE EMOTIONS OF SUBLIMITY AND BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Effect produced upon the Imagination, by Objects of Sublimity and Beauty.

SECTION I.

THE emotions of ſublimity and beauty are uniformly aſcribed, both in popular and in philoſophical language, to the imagination. The fine arts are conſidered as the arts which are addreſſed to the imagination, and the pleaſures they afford, are deſcribed, by way of diſtinction, as the Pleaſures of the Imagination. The nature of any perſon's taſte, is, in common life, generally determined from the nature or character of his imagination, and the expreſſion of any defi-

ciency in this power of mind, is conſidered as ſynonymous with the expreſſion of a ſimilar deficiency in point of taſte.

Although, however, this connection is ſo generally acknowledged, it is not perhaps as generally underſtood in what it conſiſts, or what is the nature of that effect which is produced upon the imagination, by objects of ſublimity and beauty. I ſhall endeavour, therefore, in the firſt place, to ſtate, what ſeems to me the nature of this effect, or, in what that exerciſe of imagination conſiſts, which is ſo generally ſuppoſed to take place, when theſe emotions are felt.

When any object, either of ſublimity or beauty, is preſented to the mind, I believe every man is conſcious of a train of thought being immediately awakened in his imagination, analogous to the character or expreſſion of the original object. The ſimple perception of the object, we frequently find, is inſufficient to excite theſe emotions, unleſs it is accompanied with this operation of mind, unleſs, according to common expreſſion, our imagination is ſeized, and our fancy buſied in the purſuit of all thoſe trains of thought, which are allied to this character or expreſſion.

Thus, when we feel either the beauty or ſublimity of natural ſcenery, the gay luſtre of a morning in ſpring, or the mild radiance of a ſummer evening, the ſavage majeſty of a wintry ſtorm, or the wild magnificence of a tempeſtuous ocean, we are conſcious of a variety of images in our minds, very different from thoſe which the

the objects themſelves can preſent to the eye. Trains of pleaſing or of ſolemn thoughts ariſe ſpontaneouſly within our minds, our hearts ſwell with emotions, of which the objects before us ſeem to afford no adequate cauſe; and we are never ſo much ſatiated with delight, as when, in recalling our attention, we are unable to trace either the progreſs or the connection of thoſe thoughts, which have paſſed with ſo much rapidity through our imagination.

The effect of the different arts of taſte is ſimilar. The landſcapes of Claude Lorrain, the muſic of Handel, the poetry of Milton, excite feeble emotions in our minds, when our attention is confined to the qualities they preſent to our ſenſes, or when it is to ſuch qualities of their compoſition that we turn our regard. It is then, only, we feel the ſublimity or beauty of their productions, when our imaginations are kindled by their power, when we loſe ourſelves amid the number of images that paſs before our minds, and when we waken at laſt from this play of fancy, as from the charm of a romantic dream. The beautiful apoſtrophe of the Abbé de Lille, upon the ſubject of gardening,

> N'avez vous pas ſouvent, au lieux infrequentés,
> Rencontré tout-à-coup, ces aſpects enchantés,
> Qui ſuſpendent vos pas, dont l'image chérie
> Vous jette en une douce et longue réverie ?

is equally applicable to every other compoſition of taſte; and in the production of ſuch trains of thought, ſeems to conſiſt the effect which objects

of ſublimity and beauty have upon the imagination.

For the truth of this obſervation itſelf, I muſt finally appeal to the conſciouſneſs of the reader; but there are ſome very familiar conſiderations, which it may be uſeful to ſuggeſt, that ſeem very ſtrongly to ſhew the connection between this exerciſe of imagination, and the exiſtence of the emotions of ſublimity or beauty.

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SECTION II.

THAT unleſs this exerciſe of imagination is excited, the emotions of beauty or ſublimity are unfelt, ſeems capable of illuſtration, from many inſtances of a very familiar kind.

I.

If the mind is in ſuch a ſtate, as to prevent this freedom of imagination, the emotion, whether of ſublimity or beauty, is unperceived. In ſo far as the beauties of art or nature affect the external ſenſes, their effect is the ſame upon every man who is in poſſeſſion of theſe ſenſes. But to a man in pain or in grief, whoſe mind, by theſe means, is attentive only to one object or conſideration, the ſame ſcene or the ſame form, will produce no feeling of admiration, which, at other times, when his imagination was at liberty, would have produced it, in its fulleſt perfection. Whatever is great or beautiful in the ſcenery of external nature, is almoſt conſtantly before us; and not a day paſſes, without preſenting us with appearances, fitted both to charm and to elevate our minds; yet it is in general with a heedleſs eye that we regard them, and only in particular moments that we are ſenſible of their power. There is no man, for inſtance, who has not felt the beauty of ſunſet; yet every one can remember many inſtances, when this moſt ſtriking ſcene had no effect at all upon his imagination; and when he has beheld all the magnificence with which nature generally

diſtinguiſhes

diſtinguiſhes the cloſe of day, without one ſentiment of admiration or delight. There are times, in the ſame manner, when we can read the Georgics, or the Seaſons, with perfect indifference, and with no more emotion, than what we feel from the moſt unintereſting compoſition in proſe; while in other moments, the firſt lines we meet with, take poſſeſſion of our imagination, and awaken in it ſuch innumerable trains of imagery, as almoſt leave behind the fancy of the poet. In theſe, and ſimilar caſes of difference in our feelings, from the ſame objects, it will always be found, that the difference ariſes from the ſtate of our imaginations; from our diſpoſition to follow out the train of thought, which ſuch objects naturally produce, or our incapacity to do it, from ſome other idea, which has at that time taken poſſeſſion of our minds, and renders us unable to attend to any thing elſe. That ſtate of mind, every man muſt have felt, is moſt favourable to the emotions of taſte, in which the imagination is free and unembarraſſed, or in which the attention is ſo little occupied by any private or particular object of thought, as to leave us open to all the impreſſions, which the objects that are before us, can create. It is upon the vacant and the unemployed, accordingly, that the objects of taſte make the ſtrongeſt impreſſion. It is in ſuch hours alone, that we turn to the compoſitions of muſic, or of poetry, for amuſement. The ſeaſons of care, of grief, or of buſineſs, have other occupations, and deſtroy, for the time at leaſt, our ſenſibility to the beautiful or the ſublime, in the ſame proportion, that they produce a ſtate of mind unfavourable to the indulgence of imagination.

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The ſame thing is obſervable in criticiſm. When we ſit down to appreciate the value of a poem, or of a painting, and attend minutely to the language or compoſition of the one, or to the colouring or deſign of the other, we feel no longer the delight which they at firſt produce. Our imagination in this employment is reſtrained, and inſtead of yielding to its ſuggeſtions, we ſtudiouſly endeavour to reſiſt them, by fixing our attention upon minute and partial circumſtances of the compoſition. How much this operation of mind tends to diminiſh our ſenſe of its beauty, every one will feel, who attends to his own thoughts on ſuch an occaſion, or who will recollect how different was his ſtate of mind, when he firſt felt the beauty either of the painting or the poem. It is this, chiefly, which makes it ſo difficult for young people, poſſeſſed of imagination, to judge of the merits of any poem or fable, and which induces them ſo often to give their approbation to compoſitions of little value. It is not, that they are incapable of learning in what the merits of ſuch compoſitions conſiſt, for theſe principles of judgment are neither numerous nor abſtruſe. It is not, that greater experience produces greater ſenſibility, for this every thing contradicts; but it is, becauſe every thing, in that period of life, is able to excite their imaginations, and to move their hearts, becauſe they judge of the compoſition, not by its merits, when compared with other works, or by its approach to any abſtract or ideal ſtandard, but by its effect in agitating their imaginations, and leading them into

into that fairy land, in which the fancy of youth has ſo much delight to wander. It is their own imagination, which has the charm, which they attribute to the work, that excites it; and the ſimpleſt tale, or the pooreſt novel, is, at that time, as capable of awakening it, as afterwards the eloquence of Virgil or Rouſſeau. All this, however, all this flow of imagination, in which youth, and men of ſenſibility, are ſo apt to indulge, and which ſo often brings them pleaſure at the expence of their taſte, the labour of criticiſm deſtroys. The mind, in ſuch an employment, inſtead of being at liberty to follow whatever trains of imagery the compoſition before it can excite, is either fettered to the conſideration of ſome of its minute and ſolitary parts; or pauſes amid the rapidity of its conceptions, to make them the objects of its attention and review. In theſe operations, accordingly, the emotion, whether of beauty, or ſublimity, is loſt, and if it is wiſhed to be recalled, it can only be done by relaxing this vigour of attention, and reſigning ourſelves again, to the natural ſtream of our thoughts. The mathematician who inveſtigates the demonſtrations of the Newtonian philoſophy, the painter who ſtudies the deſign of Raphael, the poet who reaſons upon the meaſure of Milton, all, in ſuch occupations, loſe the delight which theſe ſeveral productions can give; and when they are willing to recover their emotion, muſt withdraw their attention from thoſe minute conſiderations, and leave their fancy to expatiate at will, amid all the great or pleaſing conceptions, which ſuch productions of genius can raiſe.

III. The

III.

The effect which is thus produced upon the mind, by temporary exertions of attention, is alſo more permanently produced by the difference of original character; and the degree in which the emotions of ſublimity or beauty are felt, is, in general, proportioned to the prevalence of thoſe relations of thought in the mind, upon which this exerciſe of imagination depends. The principal relation, which ſeems to take place in thoſe trains of thought, that are produced by objects of taſte, is that of reſemblance; the relation of all others, the moſt looſe and general, and which affords the greateſt range of thought, for our imagination to purſue. Wherever, accordingly, theſe emotions are felt, it will be found, not only that this is the relation which principally prevails among our ideas, but that the emotion itſelf is proportioned to the degree in which it prevails.

In the effect which is produced upon our minds, by the different appearances of Natural ſcenery, it is eaſy to trace this progreſs of reſembling thought, and to obſerve, how faithfully the conceptions which ariſe in our imaginations, correſpond to the impreſſions which the characters of theſe ſeaſons produce. What, for inſtance, is the impreſſion we feel from the ſcenery of ſpring? The ſoft and gentle green with which the earth is ſpread, the feeble texture of the plants and flowers, the young of animals juſt entering into life, and the remains of winter yet lingering among the woods and hills, all conſpire

ſpire to infuſe into our minds ſomewhat of that fearful tenderneſs with which infancy is uſually beheld. With ſuch a ſentiment, how innumerable are the ideas which preſent themſelves to our imagination! Ideas, it is apparent, by no means confined to the ſcene before our eyes, or to the poſſible deſolation which may yet await its infant beauty, but which almoſt involuntarily extend themſelves to analogies with the life of man, and bring before us all thoſe images of hope or fear, which, according to our peculiar ſituations, have the dominion of our hearts!— The beauty of autumn is accompanied with a ſimilar exerciſe of thought. The leaves begin then to drop from the trees, the flowers and ſhrubs, with which the fields were adorned in the ſummer months, decay, the woods and groves are ſilent, the ſun himſelf ſeems gradually to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power. Who is there, who, at this ſeaſon, does not feel his mind impreſſed with a ſentiment of melancholy? or who is able to reſiſt that current of thought, which, from ſuch appearances of decay, ſo naturally leads him to the ſolemn imagination of that inevitable fate, which is to bring on alike the decay of life, of empire, and of nature itſelf? In ſuch caſes of emotion, every man muſt have felt, that the character of the ſcene is no ſooner impreſſed upon his mind, than various trains of correſpondent imagery riſe before his imagination; that whatever may be the nature of the impreſſion, the general tone of his thoughts partakes of this nature or character; and that his delight is proportioned to the degree in which this uniformity of character prevails.

The

The ſame effect, however, is not produced upon all men. There are many, whom the proſpect of ſuch appearances in nature, excites to no exerciſe of fancy whatever; who, by their original conſtitution, are more diſpoſed to the employment of attention, than of imagination, and who, in the objects that are preſented to them, are more apt to obſerve their individual and diſtinguiſhing qualities, than thoſe by which they are related to other objects of their knowledge. Upon the minds of ſuch men, the relation of reſemblance has little power; the efforts of their imagination, accordingly, are either feeble or ſlow, and the general character of their underſtandings, is that of ſteady and preciſe, rather than that of enlarged and extenſive thought. It is, I believe, conſiſtent with general experience, that men of this deſcription are little ſenſible to the emotions of ſublimity or beauty; and they who have attended to the language of ſuch men, when objects of this kind have been preſented to them, muſt have perceived, that the emotion they felt, was no greater than what they themſelves have experienced in thoſe caſes, where they have exerted a ſimilar degree of attention, or when any other cauſe has reſtrained the uſual exerciſe of their imagination. To the qualities which are productive of ſimple emotion, to the uſeful, the agreeable, the fitting, or the convenient in objects, they have the ſame ſenſibility with other men; but of the ſuperior and more complex emotion of beauty, they ſeem to be either altogether unconſcious, or to ſhare in it, only in proportion to the degree in which they can relax this ſeverity of attention, and yield to the relation of reſembling thought.

It

It is in the ſame manner, that the progreſs of life generally takes from men their ſenſibility to the objects of taſte. The ſeaſon in which theſe are felt in their fulleſt degree is in youth, when, according to common expreſſion, the imagination is warm, or, in other words, when it is eaſily excited to that exertion upon which ſo much of the emotion of beauty depends. The buſineſs of life, in the greateſt part of mankind, and the habits of more accurate thought, which are required by the few who reaſon and reflect, tend equally to produce in both, a ſtricter relation to the train of their thoughts, and greater attention to the objects of their conſideration, than can either be expected, or can happen in youth. They become, by theſe means, not only leſs eaſily led to any exerciſe of imagination, but their aſſociations become at the ſame time leſs conſiſtent with the employment of it. The man of buſineſs, who has paſſed his life in ſtudying the means of accumulating wealth, and the philoſopher, whoſe years have been employed in the inveſtigation of cauſes, have both not only acquired a conſtitution of mind very little fitted for the indulgence of imagination, but have acquired alſo aſſociations of a very different kind from thoſe which take place, when imagination is employed. In the firſt of theſe characters, the proſpect of any beautiful ſcene in nature, would induce no other idea than that of its value. In the other, it would lead only to ſpeculations upon the cauſes of the beauty that was aſcribed to it. In both, it would thus excite ideas, which could be the foundation of no exerciſe of imagination, becauſe they required thought and attention. To a young mind, on the contrary, poſſeſſed of any ſenſibility,

lity, how many pleaſing ideas would not ſuch a proſpect afford? ideas of peace and innocence, and rural joy, and all the unblemiſhed delights of ſolitude and contemplation. In ſuch trains of imagery, no labour of thought, or habits of attention, are required; they riſe ſpontaneouſly in the mind, upon the proſpect of any object, to which they bear the ſlighteſt reſemblance, and they lead it almoſt inſenſibly along, in a kind of bewitching reverie, through all its ſtore of pleaſing or intereſting conceptions. To the philoſopher, or the man of buſineſs, the emotion of beauty, from ſuch a ſcene, would be but feebly known; but by the young mind, which had ſuch ſenſibility, it would be felt in all its warmth, and would produce an emotion of delight, which not only would be little comprehended by men of a ſeverer or more thoughtful character, but which ſeems alſo to be very little dependent upon the object which excites it, and to be derived, in a great meaſure, from this exerciſe of mind itſelf.

In theſe familiar inſtances, it is obvious, how much the emotions of taſte are connected with this ſtate or character of imagination, and how much thoſe habits or employments of mind, which demand attention, or which limit it to the conſideration of ſingle objects, tend to diminiſh the ſenſibility of mankind, to the emotions of ſublimity or beauty.

SEC.

SECTION III.

THERE are many other inſtances equally familiar which are ſufficient to ſhew, that whatever increaſes this exerciſe or employment of Imagination, increaſes alſo the emotion of beauty or ſublimity.

I.

This is very obviouſly the effect of all Aſſociations. There is no man, who has not ſome intereſting aſſociations with particular ſcenes, or airs, or books, and who does not feel their beauty or ſublimity enhanced to him, by ſuch connections. The view of the houſe where one was born, of the ſchool where one was educated, and where the gay years of infancy were paſſed, is indifferent to no man. They recall ſo many images of paſt happineſs, and paſt affections, they are connected with ſo many ſtrong or valued emotions, and lead altogether to ſo long a train of feelings and recollections, that there is hardly any ſcene which one ever beholds with ſo much rapture. There are ſongs alſo, that we have heard in our infancy, which, when brought to our remembrance in after years, raiſe emotions, for which we cannot well account; and which, though perhaps very indifferent in themſelves, ſtill continue from this aſſociation, and from the variety of conceptions which they kindle in our minds, to be our favourites through life. The ſcenes which have been diſtinguiſhed by the reſidence of any perſon, whoſe memory we admire,

mire, produce a ſimilar effect. "Movemur "enim, neſcio quo pacto, locis ipſis, in quibus "eorum, quos diligimus, aut admiramur adſunt "veſtigia." The ſcenes themſelves may be little beautiful; but the delight with which we recollect the traces of their lives, blends itſelf inſenſibly with the emotions which the ſcenery itſelf, excites; and the admiration which theſe recollections afford, ſeems to give a kind of ſanctity to the place where they dwelt, and converts every thing into beauty which appears to have been connected with them. There are ſcenes, undoubtedly, more beautiful than Runnymede, yet to thoſe who recollect the great event which paſſed there, there is no ſcene, perhaps, which ſo ſtrongly ſeizes upon the imagination; and although the emotions this recollection produces, are of a very different kind from thoſe which the mere natural ſcenery can excite, yet they unite themſelves ſo well with theſe inferior emotions, and ſpread ſo venerable a charm over the whole, that one can hardly perſuade one's ſelf, that the ſcene itſelf is not entitled to this admiration. The valley of Vaucluſe is celebrated for its beauty, yet how much of it has being owing, to its being the reſidence of Petrarch!

Mais ces eaux, ce beau ciel, ce vallon enchanteur,
Moins que Pétrarque et Laure intereſſoient mon cœur.
La voila donc diſois-je, oui, voila cette rive
Que Pétrarque charmoit de ſa lyre plaintive;
Ici Pétrarque à Laure exprimant ſon amour,
Voyoit naître trop tard, mourir trop tot, le jour.
Retrouverai-je encore, ſur ces rocs ſolitaires,
De leurs chiffres unis les tendres caracteres?
Une grotte écartée avoit frappé mes yeux,
Grotte ſombre, dis-moi ſi tu les vis heureux,
M'écriois-je! un vieux tronc bordoit-il le rivage?
Laure avoit repoſé ſous ſon antique ombrage;

Je

Je redemandois Laure à l'echo du vallon,
Et l'echo n'avoit point oublié ce doux nom.
Partout mes yeux cherchoient, voyoient, Pétrarque et Laure,
Et par eux, ces beaux lieux s'embelliſſoient encore.
Les Jardins, Chant 3me.

The Sublime is increaſed, in the ſame manner, by whatever tends to increaſe this exerciſe of imagination. The field of any celebrated battle becomes ſublime from this aſſociation. No man, acquainted with Engliſh hiſtory, can behold the field of Agincourt, without ſome emotion of this kind. The additional conceptions which this aſſociation produces, and which fill the mind of the ſpectator on the proſpect of that memorable field, diffuſe themſelves in ſome meaſure over the ſcene, and give it a ſublimity which does not naturally belong to it. The majeſty of the Alps themſelves is increaſed by the remembrance of Hannibal's march over them; and who is there, that could ſtand on the banks of the Rubicon, without feeling his imagination kindle, and his heart beat high?

" Middleton Dale," ſays Mr. Whately, " is " a cleft between rocks, aſcending gradually " from a romantic village, till it emerges, at " about two miles diſtance, on the vaſt moor- " lands of the Peak. It is a diſmal entrance to a " deſart; the hills above it are bare, the rocks " are of a grey colour, their ſurfaces are rugged, " and their ſhapes ſavage, frequently terminat- " ing in craggy points, ſometimes reſembling " vaſt unwieldy bulwarks, or riſing in heavy " battreſſes one above another, and here and " there a miſhapen maſs bulging out, hangs low- " ering over its baſe. No traces of men are to be

" be ſeen, except in a road which has no effect
" on ſuch a ſcene of deſolation, and in the lime-
" kilns conſtantly ſmoking on the ſide. The ſoil
" is disfigured with all the tinges of brown and
" red, which denote barrenneſs; in ſome places
" it has crumbled away, and ſtrata of looſe dark
" ſtones only appear; and in others, long lines
" of droſs ſhovelled out of the mines, have fal-
" len down the ſteeps. In theſe mines, the veins
" of lead on one ſide of the Dale, are obſerved
" always to have correſponding veins, in the
" ſame direction, on the other; and the rocks,
" though differing widely in different places, yet
" always continue in one ſtyle for ſome way to-
" gether, and ſeem to have a relation to each
" other. Both theſe appearances make it proba-
" ble that Middleton Dale is a chaſm rent in the
" mountains by ſome convulſion of nature be-
" yond the memory of man, or perhaps before
" the iſland was peopled. The ſcene, though it
" does not prove the fact, yet juſtifies the ſuppo-
" ſition, and it gives credit to the tales of the
" country people, who, to aggravate its horrors,
" always point to a precipice, down which they
" ſay a young woman of the village threw her-
" ſelf headlong, in deſpair at the neglect of a
" man whom ſhe loved; and ſhew a cavern,
" where a ſkeleton once was diſcovered, but of
" what wretch is unknown; his bones were the
" only memorial left of him."

Obſervations upon Modern Gardening, p. 93.

It is ſurely unneceſſary to remark, how much the ſublimity of this extraordinary ſcene, is increaſ-ed, by the circumſtances of horror, which are ſo finely connected with it.

One of the ſublimeſt objects in natural ſcenery, is an old and deep wood covering the ſide of a mountain, when ſeen from below; yet how much greater ſublimity is given to it, by Dr. Akenſide, by the addition of the ſolemn images which in the following lines are aſſociated with it?

——— Mark the ſable woods
That ſhade ſublime yon mountain's nodding brow.
With what religious awe, the ſolemn ſcene
Commands your ſteps! as if the reverend form
Of Minos or of Numa, ſhould forſake
Th' Elyſian ſeats, and down th' embowering glade
Move to your pauſing eye.———

Pleaſures of Imagination, Book 3.

There is a paſſage in one of the Odes of the ſame poet, in which a ſcene, which is in general only beautiful, is rendered ſtrikingly ſublime, from the imagery with which it is aſſociated.

'Tis thus to work her baneful power,
Suſpicion waits the ſullen hour
Of fretfulneſs and ſtrife,
When care the infirmer boſom wrings,
Or Eurus waves his murky wings,
To damp the ſeats of life.
But come, forſake the ſcene unbleſs'd
Which firſt beheld your faithful breaſt
To groundleſs fears a prey:
Come, where with my prevailing lyre
The ſkies, the ſtreams, the groves conſpire
To charm your doubts away.
Thron'd in the ſun's deſcending car
What Power unſeen diffuſeth far
This tenderneſs of mind?

What

What Genius ſmiles on yonder flood!
What God in whiſpers from the wood
Bids every thought be kind?

Ode to Suſpicion.

I know not, however, any inſtance, where the effect of aſſociation, is ſo remarkable in beſtowing ſublimity on objects, to which it does not naturally belong, as in the following inimitable poem of Buchanan's, on the month of May. This ſeaſon is, in general, fitted to excite emotions very different from ſublimity, and the numerous poems which have been written in celebration of it, dwell uniformly, on its circumſtances of "vernal joy." In this ode, however, the circumſtances which the poet has ſelected, are of a kind, which, to me, appear inexpreſſibly ſublime, and diſtinguiſh the poem itſelf by a degree and character of grandeur, which I have ſeldom found equalled in any other compoſition. The idea of it was probably taken from theſe fine lines of Virgil in the ſecond Georgic, in deſcribing the effects of ſpring.

Non alios, prima creſcentis origine mundi
Illuxiſſe dies, aliumve habuiſſe tenorem
Crediderim: ver illud erat, ver magnus agebat
Orbis, et hybernis parcebant flatibus Euri:
Cum primum lucem pecudes hauſere, virûmque,
Ferrea progenies duris caput extulit arvis,
Immiſſæque feræ ſylvis, et ſidera cœlo.

I believe, however, no one will doubt, how much Buchanan has improved, upon this beautiful idea.

CALENDÆ MAIÆ.

Salvete ſacris deliciis ſacræ
Maiæ calendæ, lætitiæ et mero

Ludiſque dicatæ jociſque
Et teneris charitum choreis.
Salve voluptas et nitidum decus
Anni recurrens perpetua vice,
Et flos renaſcentis juventæ
In ſenium properantis Ævi.
Cum blanda veris temperies novo
Illuxit orbi, primaque ſecula
Fulſere flaventi metallo,
Sponte ſua, ſine lege, juſta,
Talis per omnes continuus tenor
Annos tepenti rura Favonio
Mulcebat, et nullis feraces
Seminibus recreabat agros.
Talis beatis incubat inſulis
Felicis auræ perpetuus tepor,
Et neſciis campis ſenectæ
Difficilis, querulique morbi.
Talis filentum per tacitum nemus
Levi ſuſurrat murmure ſpiritus,
Lethenque juxta oblivioſam
Funereas agitat cupreſſos.
Forſan ſupremis cum Deus ignibus
Piabit orbem, lætaque ſecula
Mundo reducet, talis aura
Æthereos animos fovebit.
Salve fugacis gloria ſeculi,
Salve ſecunda digna dies nota,
Salve vetuſtæ vitæ imago,
Et ſpecimen venientis Ævi.

National aſſociations, have a ſimilar effect in increaſing the emotions of ſublimity and beauty, as they very obviouſly increaſe the number of images, preſented to the mind. The fine lines which Virgil has dedicated in his Georgics, to the praiſes of his native country, however beautiful to us, were yet undoubtedly read with a far ſuperior emotion, by an ancient Roman. The prodigies which the ſame poet has deſcribed, as preceding

preceding the death of Cæſar, and the ſtill more minute deſcription which Lucan, in the firſt book of his Pharſalia, has given of ſuch events, on the approach of the civil war, muſt probably have given to a Roman, who was under the dominion of ſuch national ſuperſtitions, the ſtrongeſt emotions of ſublimity and terror. But we read them now without any other emotion, than what ariſes from the beauty of the compoſition.

The influence of ſuch aſſociations, in increaſing either the beauty or ſublimity of Muſical compoſition, can hardly have eſcaped any perſon's obſervation. The tune called Belliſle March, is ſaid, by a very eminent writer, to have owed its popularity among the people of England, to the ſuppoſition, that it was the tune which was played, when the Engliſh army marched into Belliſle, and to its conſequent aſſociation with images of fame, and conqueſt, and military glory. There are other tunes of the ſame character, which, without any peculiar merit, yet always ſerve to pleaſe the people, whenever they are performed. The natives of any country, which poſſeſſes a national or characteriſtic muſic, need not be reminded, how ſtrongly the performance of ſuch airs brings back to them the imagery of their native land; and muſt often have had occaſion to remark how inferior an emotion they excite in thoſe who are ſtrangers to ſuch aſſociations. The effect of the celebrated national ſong, which is ſaid to overpower the Swiſs ſoldier in a foreign land, with melancholy and deſpair, and which it is therefore found neceſſary to forbid in the armies in which they ſerve, cannot ſurely be attributed to its compoſition alone, but to the recollections that it brings,

brings, and to thoſe images that it kindles in his mind of peace, and freedom, and domeſtic pleaſure, from which he is torn, and to which he may never return. Whatever may be the ſublimity of Handel's muſic, the ſingular effect of it, on ſome late occaſions, is, doubtleſs, not to be aſcribed to that ſublimity alone, but in a peculiar manner to the place where it was performed; not only from the ſacredneſs of that place, which is, of itſelf, ſo well fitted to excite many awful emotions; but in a conſiderable degree alſo, from its being the repoſitory of ſo many "illuſtrious dead," and the ſcene, perhaps of all others, moſt ſacred to thoſe who have any ſenſibility to the glories of their country.

There are aſſociations, alſo, which ariſe from particular profeſſions, or habits of thought, which ſerve very well to illuſtrate the ſame obſervation. No man, in general, is ſenſible to beauty, in thoſe ſubjects with regard to which he has not previous ideas. The beauty of a theory, or of a relic of antiquity, is unintelligible to a peaſant. The charms of the country are altogether loſt upon a citizen, who has paſſed his life in town. In the ſame manner, the more that our ideas are increaſed, or our conceptions extended upon any ſubject, the greater the number of aſſociations we connect with it, the ſtronger is the emotion of ſublimity or beauty we receive from it.

The pleaſure, for inſtance, which the generality of mankind receive from any celebrated painting, is trifling when compared to that which a painter feels, if he is a man of any common degree of candour. What is, to them, only an accurate

accurate repreſentation of nature, is, to him, a beautiful exertion of genius, and a perfect diſplay of art. The difficulties which occur to his mind in the deſign and execution of ſuch a performance, and the teſtimonies of ſkill, of taſte, and of invention, which the accompliſhment of it exhibit, excite a variety of emotions in his breaſt, of which the common ſpectator is altogether unſuſceptible; and the admiration with which he thus contemplates the genius and art of the painter, blends itſelf with the peculiar emotions which the picture itſelf can produce, and enhances to him every beauty that it may poſſeſs.

The beauty of any ſcene in nature, is ſeldom ſo ſtriking to others, as it is to a landſcape painter, or to thoſe who profeſs the beautiful art of laying out grounds. The difficulties both of invention and execution which from their profeſſions are familiar to them, render the profuſion with which nature often ſcatters the moſt pictureſque beauties, little leſs than miraculous. Every little circumſtance of form and perſpective, and light and ſhade, which are unnoticed by a common eye, are important in theirs, and mingling in their minds the ideas of difficulty, and facility in overcoming it, produce altogether an emotion of delight, incomparably more animated than any that the generality of mankind uſually derive from it.

The delight which moſt men of education receive from the conſideration of antiquity, and the beauty that they diſcover in every object which is connected with ancient times, is in a great

great meaſure to be aſcribed to the ſame cauſe. The antiquarian, in his cabinet, ſurrounded by the relics of former ages, ſeems to himſelf to be removed to periods that are long ſince paſt, and indulges in the imagination of living in a world, which, by a very natural kind of prejudice, we are always willing to believe was both wiſer and better than the preſent. All that is venerable or laudable in the hiſtory of theſe times preſent themſelves to his memory. The gallantry, the heroiſm, the patriotiſm of antiquity riſe again before his view, ſoftened by the obſcurity in which they are involved, and rendered more ſeducing to the imagination by that obſcurity itſelf, which, while it mingles a ſentiment of regret amid his purſuits, ſerves at the ſame time to ſtimulate his fancy to fill up by its own creation thoſe long intervals of time of which hiſtory has preſerved no record. The relics he contemplates ſeem to approach him ſtill nearer to the ages of his regard. The dreſs, the furniture, the arms of the times, are ſo many aſſiſtances to his imagination, in guiding or directing its exerciſe, and offering him a thouſand ſources of imagery, provide him with an almoſt inexhauſtible field in which his memory and his fancy may expatiate. There are few men who have not felt ſomewhat, at leaſt, of the delight of ſuch an employment. There is no man in the leaſt acquainted with the hiſtory of antiquity, who does not love to let his imagination looſe on the proſpect of its remains, and to whom they are not in ſome meaſure ſacred, from the innumerable images which they bring. Even the peaſant, whoſe knowledge of former times extends but to a few generations, has yet in his village ſome monument of the deeds or virtues of his forefathers;

and

and cheriſhes with a fond veneration the memorial of thoſe good old times to which his imagination returns with delight, and of which he loves to recount the ſimple tales that tradition has brought him.

And what is it that conſtitutes that emotion of ſublime delight, which every man of common ſenſibility feels upon the firſt proſpect of ROME? It is not the ſcene of deſtruction which is before him. It is not the Tyber diminiſhed in his imagination to a paltry ſtream, flowing amid the ruins of that magnificence which it once adorned. It is not the triumph of ſuperſtition over the wreck of human greatneſs, and its monuments erected upon the very ſpot where the firſt honours of humanity have been gained. It is ancient Rome which fills his imagination. It is the country of Cæſar, and Cicero, and Virgil, which is before him. It is the miſtreſs of the world which he ſees, and who ſeems to him to riſe again from her tomb, to give laws to the univerſe. All that the labours of his youth, or the ſtudies of his maturer age have acquired with regard to the hiſtory of this great people, open at once before his imagination, and preſent him with a field of high and ſolemn imagery which can never be exhauſted. Take from him theſe aſſociations, conceal from him that it is Rome that he ſees, and how different would be his emotion!

II.

The effect which is thus produced, by Aſſociations, in increaſing the emotions of ſublimity or beauty, is produced alſo, either in nature, or in deſcription,

deſcription, by what are generally termed Pictureſque Objects. Inſtances of ſuch objects are familiar to every one's obſervation. An old tower in the middle of a deep wood, a bridge flung acroſs a chaſm between rocks, a cottage on a precipice, are common examples. If I am not miſtaken, the effect which ſuch objects have on every one's mind, is to ſuggeſt an additional train of conceptions, beſide what the ſcene or deſcription itſelf would have ſuggeſted; for it is very obvious, that no objects are remarked as pictureſque, which do not ſtrike the imagination by themſelves. They are, in general, ſuch circumſtances, as coincide, but are not neceſſarily connected, with the character of the ſcene or deſcription, and which at firſt affecting the mind with an emotion of ſurpriſe, produce afterwards an increaſed or additional train of imagery. The effect of ſuch objects, in increaſing the emotions either of beauty or ſublimity, will probably be obvious from the following inſtances.

The beauty of ſunſet, in a fine autumnal evening, ſeems almoſt incapable of addition from any circumſtance. The various and radiant colouring of the clouds, the ſoft light of the ſun, that gives ſo rich a glow to every object on which it falls, the dark ſhades with which it is contraſted, and the calm and deep repoſe that ſeems to ſteal over univerſal nature, form altogether a ſcene, which ſerves perhaps better than any other in the world, to ſatiate the imagination with delight: Yet there is no man who does not know how great an addition this fine ſcene is capable of receiving from the circumſtance of the evening bell. In what, however, does the effect of this moſt pictureſque circumſtance

cumſtance conſiſt? Is it not in the additional images which are thus ſuggeſted to the imagination? images indeed of melancholy and ſadneſs, but which ſtill are pleaſing, and which ſerve moſt wonderfully to accord with that ſolemn and penſive ſtate of mind, which is almoſt irreſiſtibly produced by this charming ſcene.

Nothing can be more beautiful than Dr. Goldſmith's deſcription of evening, in the Deſerted Village.

Sweet was the ſound, when oft at evening's cloſe
Up yonder hill the village murmur roſe.
There as I paſs'd with careleſs ſteps and ſlow,
The mingling notes came ſoften'd from below:
The ſwain reſponſive as the milk-maid ſung,
The ſober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noiſy geeſe that gabbl'd o'er the pool,
The playful children juſt let looſe from ſchool,
The watch dog's voice that bay'd the whiſpering wind,
And the loud laugh, that ſpoke the vacant mind:

Yet how much is the beauty of this deſcription increaſed, by the fine circumſtance with which it is cloſed?

Theſe all in ſoft confuſion ſought the ſhade,
And fill'd each pauſe the nightingale had made.

There is a beauty of the ſame kind produced in the "Seaſons," by the addition of one of the moſt picturesque circumſtances that was ever imagined by a poet.

——— Lead me to the mountain brow,
Where ſits the ſhepherd on the graſſy turf,
Inhaling, healthful, the deſcending ſun.

Around

Around him feeds his many bleating flock
Of various cadence, and his ſportive lambs
Their frolics play; and now the ſprightly race
Invites them forth, when ſwift the ſignal given
They ſtart away, and ſweep the moſſy mound
That runs around the hill, the rampart once
Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times.

Spring.

The ſcene is undoubtedly beautiful of itſelf, without the addition of the laſt circumſtance; yet how much more beautiful does it become by the new order of thought which this circumſtance awakens in the mind, and which contraſting the remembrance of ancient warfare and turbulent times, with the ſerenity and repoſe of the modern ſcene, agitate the imagination with a variety of indiſtinct conceptions, which otherwiſe could never have ariſen in it?

The phyſical arguments of Buchanan, in his poem "de Sphæra," againſt the doctrine of the motion of the earth, are probably read with little emotion; but it is impoſſible to read the following lines of it without delight, from the very picturesque imagery which they contain.

Ergo tam celeri tellus ſi concita motu
Iret in Occaſum, rurſuſque rediret in Ortum,
Cuncta ſimul quateret ſecum, vaſtoque fragore,
Templa, ædes, miſeriſque etiam cum civibus, urbes
Opprimerit ſubitæ ſtrages inopina ruinæ.
Ipſæ etiam volucres tranantes aera leni
Remigio alarum, celeri vertigine terræ
Abreptas gemerent ſylvas, nidoſque tenella
Cum ſobole et chara forſan cum conjuge: nec ſe
Auderet zephyro ſolus committere turtur,

Ne

Ne procul ablatos, terra fugiente, Hymenæos
Et viduum longo luctu deflereť amorem.
Lib. 1.

There is a very ſtriking beauty of the ſame kind in a little poem of Dr. Beattie's, entitled, "Retirement."

Thy ſhades, thy ſilence now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme:
My haunt, the hollow cliff, whoſe pine
Waves o'er the gloomy ſtream,
Where the ſcar'd owl on pinions grey
Breaks from the ruſtling boughs,
And down the lone vale ſails away
To more profound repoſe.

"All," ſays Mr. Whately, in deſcribing the Tinian Lawn at Hagley, "all here is of an even "temper, all mild, placid and ſerene, in the "gayeſt ſeaſon of the day, not more than cheer-"ful in the ſtilleſt watch of night, not gloomy. "The ſcene is indeed peculiarly adapted to the "tranquillity of the latter, when the moon ſeems "to repoſe her light on the thick foliage of the "grove, and ſteadily marks the ſhade of every "bough. It is delightful then to ſaunter here, "and ſee the graſs and the goſſamer which en-"twines it gliſtening with dew, to liſten and hear "nothing ſtir, except perhaps a withered leaf, "dropping gently through a tree, and ſheltered "from the chill, to catch the freſhneſs of the "evening air." It is difficult to conceive any thing more beautiful than this deſcription, yet how much is its beauty increaſed by the concluding circumſtance? "A ſolitary urn, choſen by Mr. "Pope for the ſpot, and now inſcribed to his me-"mory,

" mory, when ſeen by a gleam of moonlight
" through the trees, fixes that thoughtfulneſs and
" compoſure, to which the mind is inſenſibly led
" by the reſt of this elegant ſcene."

Obſervations on Gardening, p. 201.

I ſhall conclude theſe inſtances of the effect of pictureſque objects, in increaſing the emotion of Beauty, with a paſſage from the Iliad, which contains one of the moſt ſtriking images that I know of in poetry, and which I am the more willing to quote, as it has not been ſo much taken notice of as it deſerves. It is the appearance of Achilles, when Phœnix and Ulyſſes are ſent from the Grecian camp to appeaſe his wrath,

Τὼ δὲ βάτην παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,
Πολλὰ μάλ' εὐχόμενω γαιήοχω Ἐννοσιγαίῳ,
Ῥηϊδίως πεπιθεῖν μεγαλήτορα Φείνος Αἰακίδαο.
Μυρμιδόνων δ' ἐπί τε κλισίας καὶ νῆας ἱκέσθην·
Τὸν δ' εὗρον Φίλα τερπόμενον φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ,
Καλῇ, δαιδαλέῃ, ἐπὶ δ' ἀργύρεον ζυγὸς ἦεν·
Τὴν ἄρετ' ἐξ ἐνάρων, πτόλιν Ἠετίωνος ὀλίσσας·
Τῇ ὄγε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν.

Iliad, Lib. ix. *v.* 182.

Thro' the ſtill night they march, and hear the roar
Of murmuring billows, on the ſounding ſhore,
And now arriv'd, where on the ſandy bay,
The Myrmidonian tents and veſſels lay,
Amus'd, at eaſe, the godlike man they found
Pleas'd with the ſolemn harp's harmonious ſound.
With this he ſooths his angry ſoul, and ſings
Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings.

Book ix. *v.* 236.

It was impoſſible for the poet, to have imagined any other occupation ſo well fitted to the mighty mind of Achilles, or ſo effectual in intereſting the reader

reader in the fate of Him whom Dr. Beattie calls, with truth, the moſt terrific human perſonage that poetical imagination has feigned.

The Sublime is increaſed in the ſame manner, by the addition of picturesque objects. The ſtriking image with which Virgil concludes the deſcription of the prodigies which attended the death of Cæſar, is well known.

Scilicet et tempus veniet cum finibus illis
Agricola, incurvo terram molitus aratro,
Exeſa inveniet ſcabrâ rubigine pila:
Aut gravibus raſtris, galeas pulſabit inanes,
Grandiaque effoſis mirabitur oſſa ſepulchris.

There are few paſſages more ſublime in the Pharſalia of Lucan, than the deſcription in the third Book, of one of Pompey's armies, blocked up by Cæſar in a part of the country where there was no water, and where the ſoldiers were periſhing with thirſt. After deſcribing very minutely, the fruitleſs attempts of the army to obtain relief, and the miſerable expedients with which they endeavoured to ſupply their wants, he proceeds in the following nervous and beautiful lines, of which I am perſuaded, the laſt circumſtance is too ſtriking to require any comment.

O fortunati, fugiens quos barbarus hoſtis,
Fontibus immiſtos ſtravit per rura veneno.
Hos licet in fluvios ſaniem, tabemque ferarum
Pallida, Dictæis, Cæſar, naſcentia ſaxis
Infundas aconita palam, Romana juventus
Non decepta bibet.—torrentur viſcera flamma
Oraque ſicca rigent ſquamoſis aſpera linguis;
Jam marcent venæ, nulloque humore rigatus
Aëris alternos anguſtat Pulmo meatus,

Reſciſſoque

Reſciſſoque nocent ſuſpiria dura palato.
Pandant ora ſiti, nocturnumque aëra captant.
Expectant imbres, quorum modo cuncta natabant
Impulſu, et ſiccis vultus in nubibus hærent.
Quoque magis miſeros undæ jejunia ſolvant,
Non, ſuper arentem Meroen, Cancrique ſub axe
Qua nudi Garamantes arant, ſedere, ſed inter
Stagnantem Sicorim et rapidum, deprenſus Iberum
Spectat vicinos, ſitiens exercitus, amnes.

Lib. 3. *ad med.*

The fine deſcription in the Gieruſalemme Liberata, of a ſimilar diſtreſs in the army of Godfrey, before the walls of Jeruſalem, has probably been borrowed from this paſſage of Lucan; and it is pleaſing to obſerve, with what addreſs Taſſo has imitated, though not copied, the pictureſque circumſtance with which the deſcription of the Roman poet is cloſed. Inſtead of aggravating the diſtreſs of the ſoldier, by the proſpect of waters, which he could not approach, he recalls to his remembrance, the cool ſhades, and ſtill fountains of his native land: a circumſtance, not only ſingularly pathetic, but more fertile alſo of imagery, than perhaps any other that the poet could have imagined.

S'alcun giamai tra frondeggiente rive
Puro vide ſtagnar liquido argento,
O giù precipitoſe vi acque vive
Pea Alpe, o'n piaggia érboſo à paſſo lento:
Quello al vago deſio forma, e deſcrive,
E miniſtra materia al ſuo tormento.

In Thomſon's deſcription of Winter in the northern regions, though the deſcription itſelf is ſublime, yet one additional circumſtance adds powerfully to its ſublimity.

Thence

Thence winding eaſtward to the Tartar coaſt,
She ſweeps the howling margin of the main,
Where undiſſolving from the firſt of time
Snows ſwell on ſnows, amazing to the ſky,
And icy mountains, high on mountains pil'd,
Seem to the ſhivering ſailor, from afar
Shapeleſs and white, an atmoſphere of clouds.
Ocean itſelf no longer can reſiſt
The binding fury: but in all its rage
Of tempeſt taken by the boundleſs froſt
Is many a fathom, to the bottom chain'd,
And bid to roar no more—a bleak expanſe
Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, cheerleſs and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conſcious, ſouthward. Miſerable they!
Who here entangled in the gathering ice
Take their laſt look of the deſcending ſun,
While full of death, and fierce with tenfold froſt
The long long night, incumbent o'er their heads
Falls horrible.——

In the following maſterly deſcription of a very ſublime ſcene in nature, by Mr. Whately, I doubt not but that it will be acknowledged, how much the ſublimity of it is increaſed, by the very picturesque imagery which the occupations of the inhabitants afford. "A ſcene at the New Weir, on "the river Wye, which in itſelf is truly great and "awful, ſo far from being diſturbed, becomes "more intereſting and important, by the buſineſs "to which it is deſtined. It is a chaſm between "two ranges of hills, which riſe almoſt perpendicularly from the water; the rocks on the ſide "are moſtly heavy maſſes, and their colour is generally brown; but here and there a pale craggy cliff ſtarts up to a vaſt height above the reſt, "unconnected, broken and bare: large trees frequently force out their way amongſt them, and

" many of them ſtand far back in the covert,
" where their natural duſky hue is deepened by the
" ſhadow which overhangs them. The river too,
" as it retires, loſes itſelf amid the woods, which
" cloſe immediately above, then riſe thick and
" high, and darken the water. In the midſt of all
" this gloom, is an iron forge, covered with a
" black cloud of ſmoke, and ſurrounded with half
" burned ore, with coal, and with cinders. The
" fuel for it is brought down a path, worn into
" ſteps, narrow, and ſteep, and winding among
" the precipices; and near it is an open ſpace of
" barren moor, about which are ſcattered the huts
" of the workmen. It ſtands cloſe to the caſcade
" of the Weir, where the agitation of the current
" is increaſed by large fragments of rocks which
" have been ſwept down by the floods from the
" banks, or ſhivered by tempeſts from the brow;
" and at ſtated intervals, the ſullen ſound, from
" the ſtrokes of the great hammers in the forge,
" deadens the roar of the waterfall."

Page 109.

There is a ſimilar beauty, if I am not miſtaken, in the concluding ſtroke of the following paſſage from Monſ. Diderot.

" Qu'eſt ce qu'il faut au poëte? Eſt-ce une na-
" ture brute ou cultivée? paiſible ou troublée?
" Préféra-t-il la beauté d'un jour pur et ſerein, à
" l'horreur d'une nuit obſcure, où le ſiflement
" interrompu des vents ſe mêle par intervalles au
" murmure ſourd et continu d'un tonnerre éloig-
" né, et où il voit l'éclair allumer le ciel ſur ſa
" tête? Préféra-t-il le ſpectacle d'une mer tran-
" quille, à celui des flots agitées? le muet et froid

" aſpect

" aſpect d'un palais, à la proménade parmi des " ruines? un édifice conſtruit, un éſpece planté " de la main des hommes, au touffu d'une antique " forêt, au creux ignoré d'une roche deſerte? " des nappes d'eau, des baſſins, des caſcades, à " la vûe d'une cataracte qui ſe briſe en tombant à " travers des rochers, et dont le bruit ſe fait en- " tendre au loin du berger, qui à conduit ſon trou- " peau dans la montagne, et qui l'écoute avec " effroi?"

Epitre à Monſ. Grimm. ſur la Poëſie Dramatique.

I ſhall conclude theſe illuſtrations with a very ſublime one from the Paradiſe Regained of Milton, in which I believe the force of the concluding ſtroke will not be denied.

——— Either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven; the clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive, pour'd
Fierce rain, with lightning mixed: nor ſlept the winds
Within their ſtony caves, but ruſh'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vext wilderneſs, whoſe talleſt pines,
Tho' rooted deep as high, and ſturdieſt oaks
Bow'd their ſtiff necks, loaden with ſtormy blaſts
Or torn up ſheer——Ill waſt Thou ſhrouded then,
O patient Son of God!

Book 4.

In theſe and a thouſand other inſtances that might be produced, I believe every man of ſenſibility will be conſcious of a variety of great or pleaſing images paſſing with rapidity in his imagination, beyond what the ſcene or deſcription immediately before him can of themſelves excite. They ſeem often, indeed, to have but a very diſ-

tant relation to the object that at firſt excited them; and the object itſelf, appears only to ſerve as a hint, to awaken the imagination, and to lead it through every analogus idea that has place in the memory. It is then, indeed, in this powerleſs ſtate of reverie, when we are carried on by our conceptions, not guiding them, that the deepeſt emotions of beauty or ſublimity are felt, that our hearts ſwell with feelings which language is too weak to expreſs, and that in the depth of ſilence and aſtoniſhment we pay to the charm that enthrals us, the moſt flattering mark of our applauſe.

" The power of ſuch characters in Nature," ſays Mr. Whately (from whom I am happy to borrow the following obſervations, not only from the beauty of their expreſſion, but from their ſingular coincidence in the illuſtration of the fact I have been endeavouring to eſtabliſh) " the power of " ſuch characters is not confined to the ideas " which the objects themſelves immediately ſug- " geſt; for theſe are connected with others, which " inſenſibly lead to ſubjects far diſtant perhaps " from the original thought, and related to it only " by ſimilitude in the ſenſations they excite. In " a proſpect enriched and enlivened with inhabi- " tants and cultivation, the attention is caught " firſt by the circumſtances which are gayeſt in " the ſeaſon, the bloom of an orchard, the feſti- " vity of a hay field, and the carols of a harveſt " home; but the cheerfulneſs which theſe infuſe " into the mind, expands afterwards to other ob- " jects than thoſe immediately preſented to the eye, " and we are thereby diſpoſed to receive, and de- " lighted to purſue, a variety of pleaſing ideas, " and every benevolent feeling. At the ſight of a

" ruin,

" ruin, reflections on the change, the decay, and
" the deſolation before us naturally occur; and
" they introduce a long ſucceſſion of others, all
" tinctured with that melancholy which theſe
" have inſpired: or if the monument revive the
" memory of former times, we do not ſtop at the
" ſimple fact which it records, but recollect many
" more coeval circumſtances, which we ſee, not
" perhaps as they were, but as they are come
" down to us, venerable with age, and magnified
" by fame. Even without the aſſiſtance of build-
" ings, or other adventitious circumſtances, na-
" ture alone furniſhes materials for ſcenes which
" may be adapted to almoſt every kind of expreſ-
" ſion. Their operation is general, and their
" conſequences infinite: the mind is elevated, de-
" preſſed, or compoſed, as gaiety, gloom, or
" tranquillity prevail in the ſcene, and we ſoon
" loſe ſight of the means by which the character is
" formed. We forget the particular objects it
" preſents, and giving way to their effects, with-
" out recurring to the cauſe, we follow the track
" they have begun, to any extent, which the diſ-
" poſitions they accord with, will allow. It ſuf-
" fices that the ſcenes of nature have power to af-
" fect our imagination and our ſenſibility: for
" ſuch is the conſtitution of the human mind, that
" if once it is agitated, the emotion often ſpreads
" beyond the occaſion: when the paſſions are
" rouſed, their courſe is unreſtrained, when the
" fancy is on the wing, its flight is unbounded,
" and quitting the inanimate objects which firſt
" gave them their ſpring, we may be led by
" thought above thought, widely differing in de-
" gree, but ſtill correſponding in character, till we
" riſe from familiar ſubjects up to the ſublimeſt

" conceptions,

" conceptions, and are rapt in the contemplation
" of whatever is great or beautiful, which we ſee
" in nature, feel in man, or attribute to the Di-
" vinity."

Page 154.

III.

The influence of ſuch additional trains of imagery, in increaſing the emotions of ſublimity or beauty, might be illuſtrated from many other circumſtances, equally familiar. I am induced to mention only the following, becauſe it is one of the moſt ſtriking that I know, and becauſe it is probable that moſt men of education have at leaſt in ſome degree been conſcious of it: The influence I mean, of an acquaintance with Poetry in our earlier years, in increaſing our ſenſibility to the beauties of nature.

The generality of mankind live in the world, without receiving any kind of delight, from the various ſcenes of beauty which its order diſplays. The riſing and ſetting of the ſun, the varying aſpect of the moon, the viciſſitude of ſeaſons, the revolution of the planets, and all the ſtupendous ſcenery that they produce, are to them only common occurrences, like the ordinary events of every day. They have been ſo long familiar, that they ceaſe to ſtrike them with any appearance either of magnificence or beauty, and are regarded by them, with no other ſentiments than as being uſeful for the purpoſes of human life. We may all remember a period in our lives, when this was the ſtate of our own minds; and it is probable moſt men will recollect, that the time when nature began to appear

pear to them in another view, was, when they were engaged in the ſtudy of claſſical literature. In moſt men, at leaſt, the firſt appearance of poetical imagination is at ſchool, when their imaginations begin to be warmed by the deſcriptions of ancient poetry, and when they have acquired a new ſenſe as it were, with which they can behold the face of nature.

How different, from this period, become the ſentiments with which the ſcenery of nature is contemplated, by thoſe who have any imagination! The beautiful forms of ancient mythology, with which the fancy of poets peopled every element, are now ready to appear to their minds, upon the proſpect of every ſcene. The deſcriptions of ancient authors, ſo long admired, and ſo deſerving of admiration, occur to them at every moment, and with them, all thoſe enthuſiaſtic ideas of ancient genius and glory, which the ſtudy of ſo many years of youth, ſo naturally leads them to form. Or, if the ſtudy of modern poetry has ſucceeded to that of the ancient, a thouſand other beautiful aſſociations are acquired, which inſtead of deſtroying, ſerve eaſily to unite with the former, and to afford a new ſource of delight. The awful forms of Gothic ſuperſtition, the wild and romantic imagery, which the turbulence of the middle ages, the Cruſades, and the inſtitution of chivalry have ſpread over every country of Europe, ariſe to the imagination in every ſcene; accompanied with all thoſe pleaſing recollections of proweſs, and adventure, and courteous manners, which diſtinguiſhed thoſe memorable times. With ſuch images in their minds, it is not common nature that appears to ſurround them. It is nature embelliſhed and made

ſacred

ſacred by the memory of Theocritus and Virgil, and Milton and Taſſo; their genius ſeems ſtill to linger among the ſcenes which inſpired it, and to irradiate every object where it dwells; and the creation of their fancy, ſeem the fit inhabitants of that nature, which their deſcriptions have clothed with beauty.

Nor is it only in providing ſo many ſources of aſſociation, that the influence of an acquaintance with poetry conſiſts. It is yet ſtill more powerful in giving *character* to the different appearances of nature, in connecting them with various emotions and affections of our hearts, and in thus providing an almoſt inexhauſtible ſource either of ſolemn or of cheerful meditation. What to ordinary men is but common occurrence, or common ſcenery, to thoſe who have ſuch aſſociations, is full of beauty. The ſeaſons of the year, which are marked only by the generality of mankind, by the different occupations or amuſements they bring, have each of them, to ſuch men, peculiar expreſſions, and awaken them to an exerciſe either of pleaſing or of awful thought. The ſeaſons of the day, which are regarded only by the common ſpectator, as the call to labour, or to reſt, are to them characteriſtic either of cheerfulneſs or ſolemnity, and connected with all the various emotions which theſe characters excite. Even the familiar circumſtances of general nature, which paſs unheeded by a common eye, the cottage, the ſheepfold, the curfew, all have expreſſions to them, becauſe, in the compoſitions to which they have been accuſtomed, theſe are all aſſociated with peculiar characters, or rendered expreſſive of them, and leading them to the remembrance of ſuch aſſociations,

enable

enable them to behold with correſponding diſpoſitions, the ſcenes which are before them, and to feel from their proſpect, the ſame powerful influence, which the eloquence of poetry has aſcribed to them.

Aſſociations of this kind, when acquired in early life, are ſeldom altogether loſt; and whatever inconveniencies they may ſometimes have with regard to the general character, or however much they may be ridiculed by thoſe who do not experience them, they are yet productive to thoſe who poſſeſs them, of a perpetual and innocent delight. Nature herſelf is their friend; in her moſt dreadful, as well as her moſt lovely ſcenes, they can diſcover ſomething either to elevate their imaginations, or to move their hearts; and amid every change of ſcenery, or of climate, can ſtill find themſelves, among the early objects of their admiration, or their love,

CHAP-

CHAP. II.

ANALYSIS *of this* EXERCISE *of* IMAGINATION.

SECTION I.

THE illuſtrations in the preceding chapter, ſeem to ſhew, that whenever the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty are felt, that exerciſe of Imagination is produced, which conſiſts in the indulgence of a train of thought; that when this exerciſe is prevented, theſe emotions are unfelt or unperceived; and that whatever tends to increaſe this exerciſe of mind, tends in the ſame proportion to increaſe theſe emotions. If theſe illuſtrations are juſt, it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that the effect produced upon the mind, by objects of Sublimity and Beauty, conſiſts in the production of this exerciſe of Imagination.

Although, however, this concluſion ſeems to me both juſt and conſonant to experience, yet it is in itſelf too general, to be conſidered as a ſufficient account of the nature of that operation of mind which takes place in the caſe of ſuch Emotions. There are many trains of ideas of which we are conſcious, which are unattended with any kind of pleaſure. There are other operations of mind, in which ſuch trains of thought are neceſſarily produced, without exciting any ſimilar emotion. Even in the common hours of life, every man is conſcious of a continued ſucceſſion

ceſſion of thoughts paſſing through his mind, ſuggeſted either by the preſence of external objects, or ariſing from the eſtabliſhed laws of aſſociation: ſuch trains of thought, however, are ſeldom attended with pleaſure, and ſtill ſeldomer with an emotion, correſponding in any degree, to the emotions of ſublimity or beauty.

There are, in like manner, many caſes where objects excite a train of thought in the mind, without exciting any emotion of pleaſure or delight. The proſpect of the houſe, for inſtance, where one has formerly lived, excites very naturally a train of conceptions in the mind; yet it is by no means true that ſuch an exerciſe of imagination is neceſſarily accompanied with pleaſure, for theſe conceptions not only may be, but very often are of a kind extremely indifferent, and ſometimes alſo ſimply painful. The mention of an event in hiſtory, or of a fact in ſcience, naturally leads us to the conception of a number of related events, or ſimilar facts; yet it is obvious, that in ſuch a caſe the exerciſe of mind which is produced, if it is accompanied with any pleaſure at all, is in moſt caſes accompanied with a pleaſure very different from that which attends the emotions of ſublimity or beauty.

If therefore ſome train of thought, or ſome exerciſe of Imagination is neceſſary for the production of the emotions of Taſte, it is obvious, that this is not every train of thought of which we are capable. To aſcertain therefore with any preciſion, either the nature or the cauſes of theſe emotions, it is previouſly neceſſary to inveſtigate

veſtigate the nature of thoſe trains of thought that are produced by objects of ſublimity and beauty, and their difference from thoſe ordinary trains, which are unaccompanied with ſuch pleaſure.

As far as I am able to judge, this difference conſiſts in two things. 1*ſt*, In the Nature of the ideas or conceptions which compoſe ſuch trains: and, 2*dly*, In the Nature or Law of their ſucceſſion.

I.

In our ordinary trains of thought, every man muſt be conſcious that the ideas which compoſe them, are very frequently of a kind which excite no emotions either of pleaſure or pain. There is an infinite variety of our ideas, as well as of our ſenſations, that may be termed indifferent, which are perceived without any ſentiment either of pain or pleaſure, and which paſs as it were before the mind, without making any farther impreſſion than ſimply exciting the conſciouſneſs of their exiſtence. That ſuch ideas compoſe a great part, and perhaps the greateſt part of our ordinary trains of thought, is apparent from the ſingle conſideration, that ſuch trains are ſeldom attended with emotion of any kind.

The trains of thought which are ſuggeſted by external objects, are very frequently of a ſimilar kind. The greater part of ſuch objects are ſimply indifferent, or at leaſt are regarded as indifferent in our common hours either of occupation or

or amuſement: the conceptions which they produce, by the laws of aſſociation partake of the nature or character of the object which originally excited them, and the whole train paſſes through our mind without leaving any farther emotion, than perhaps that general emotion of pleaſure which accompanies the exerciſe of our faculties. It is ſcarcely poſſible for us to paſs an hour of our lives without experiencing ſome train of thought of this kind, ſuggeſted by ſome of the external objects which happen to ſurround us. The indifference with which ſuch trains are either purſued or deſerted, is a ſufficient evidence, that the ideas of which they are compoſed, are in general of a kind unfitted to produce any emotion either of pleaſure or pain.

In the caſe of thoſe trains of thought, on the contrary, which are ſuggeſted by objects either of Sublimity or Beauty, I apprehend it will be found, that they are in all caſes compoſed of ideas capable of exciting ſome affection or emotion; and that not only the whole ſucceſſion is accompanied with that peculiar emotion, which we call the Emotion of Beauty or Sublimity, but that every individual idea of ſuch a ſucceſſion is in itſelf productive of ſome ſimple Emotion or other. Thus the ideas ſuggeſted by the ſcenery of Spring, are ideas productive of emotions of Cheerfulneſs, of Gladneſs, and of Tenderneſs. The images ſuggeſted by the proſpect of ruins, are images belonging to Pity, to Melancholy, and to Admiration. The ideas in the ſame manner awakened by the view of the ocean in a ſtorm,

a ſtorm, are ideas of Power, of Majeſty, and of Terror. In every caſe where the emotions of Taſte are felt, I conceive it will be found, that the train of thought which is excited, is diſtinguiſhed by ſome character of emotion, and that it is by this means diſtinguiſhed from our common or ordinary ſucceſſions of thought. To prevent a very tedious and unneceſſary circumlocution, ſuch ideas may perhaps, without any impropriety, be termed Ideas of Emotion; and I ſhall beg leave therefore to uſe the expreſſion in this ſenſe.

The firſt circumſtance, then, which ſeems to diſtinguiſh thoſe trains of thought which are produced by objects either of Sublimity or Beauty, is, that the ideas or conceptions of which they are compoſed, are ideas of Emotion.

II.

In our ordinary trains of thought, there ſeldom appears any general principle of connection among the ideas which compoſe them. Each idea, indeed, is related by an eſtabliſhed law of our nature, to that which immediately preceded and that which immediately follows it, but in the whole ſeries there is no predominant relation or bond of connection. This want of general connection is ſo ſtrong, that even that moſt general of all relations, the relation either of pleaſure or pain, is frequently violated. Images both of the one kind and the other, ſucceed each other in the courſe of the train;

train; and when we put an end to it, we are often at a loſs to ſay, whether the whole ſeries was pleaſant or painful. Of this irregularity, I think every man will be convinced who chuſes to attend to it.

In thoſe trains, on the contrary, which are ſuggeſted by objects of Sublimity or Beauty, however ſlight the connection between individual thoughts may be, I believe it will be found, that there is always ſome general principle of connection which pervades the whole, and gives them ſome certain and definite character. They are either gay, or pathetic, or melancholy, or ſolemn, or awful, or elevating, *&c.* according to the nature of the emotion which is firſt excited. Thus the proſpect of a ſerene evening in ſummer, produces firſt an emotion of peacefulneſs and tranquillity, and then ſuggeſts a variety of images correſponding to this primary impreſſion. The ſight of a torrent, or of a ſtorm, in the ſame manner, impreſſes us firſt with ſentiments of awe, or ſolemnity, or terror, and then awakens in our minds a ſeries of conceptions allied to this peculiar emotion. Whatever may be the character of the original emotion, the images which ſucceed ſeem all to have a relation to this character; and if we trace them back, we ſhall diſcover not only a connection between the individual thoughts of the train, but alſo a general relation among the whole, and a conformity to that peculiar emotion which firſt excited them.

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The train of thought, therefore, which takes place in the mind, upon the proſpect of objects of ſublimity and beauty, may be conſidered as conſiſting in a regular or conſiſtent train of ideas of emotion, and as diſtinguiſhed from our ordinary trains of thought. *1ſt*, In reſpect of the Nature of the ideas of which it is compoſed, by their being ideas productive of Emotion; and, *2dly*, In reſpect of their Succeſſion, by their being diſtinguiſhed by ſome general principle of connection, which ſubſiſts through the whole extent of the train.

The truth of the account which I have now given of the nature of that train of thought which attends the emotions of ſublimity and beauty, muſt undoubtedly at laſt be determined by its conformity to general experience and obſervation. There are ſome conſiderations however, of a very obvious and familiar kind, which it may be uſeful to ſuggeſt to the reader, for the purpoſe of affording him a method of inveſtigating with accuracy the truth of this account.

If it is true that the ideas which compoſe that train of thought, which attends the emotions of Taſte, are uniformly ideas of Emotion, then it ought in fact to be found, that no objects or qualities are experienced to be beautiful or ſublime, but ſuch as are productive of ſome ſimple Emotion.

If it is true that ſuch trains of thought are uniformly diſtinguiſhed by ſome general principle

ciple of connection, then it ought alſo to be found, that no Compoſition of objects or qualities produces ſuch emotions, in which this Unity of character or of emotion is not preſerved.

I ſhall endeavour, at ſome length, to illuſtrate the truth of both theſe propoſitions.

SECTION II.

THAT no objects, or qualities in objects, are, in fact, felt either as beautiful or ſublime, but ſuch as are productive of ſome Simple Emotion, ſeems evident from the following familiar conſiderations.

I.

Wherever the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty are felt, I believe it will be found, that ſome affection is uniformly excited, by the preſence of the object, before the more complex Emotion of Beauty is felt; and that if no ſuch affection is excited, no Emotion of Beauty or Sublimity is produced. The truth of this obſervation may be illuſtrated, both from common language, and common experience.

1. If any man were to aſſert, that ſome object, though poſitively indifferent or unintereſting, was yet beautiful or ſublime, every one would conſider it as aſſerting an abſurdity. If, on the other hand, he were to aſſert, that the object had neither beauty nor ſublimity to him, becauſe there was no quality in it which could give him any emotion, I apprehend we ſhould not only clearly underſtand his meaning, but very readily allow his reaſon; and if the object were ſuch as appeared to us in the light either of Sublimity or Beauty, and we wiſhed to make him ſenſible of it, the way that we ſhould

ſhould naturally take, would be to point out to him ſome affecting or intereſting quality, which we imagined he had overlooked, and which we felt was the foundation of our own emotion.

There is undoubtedly a very great difference between the Emotion of Taſte, and any Simple Emotion, as of Cheerfulneſs, Tenderneſs, Melancholy, Solemnity, Elevation, Terror, *&c.* as ſuch emotions are frequently felt, without any ſentiment of Beauty or Sublimity; but there is no caſe, I believe, where the Emotions of Taſte are felt, without the previous production of ſome ſuch Simple Emotion. It is often indeed difficult to ſay, what is the quality in the object which produces the Emotion of Beauty; and it is ſometimes difficult, in the caſe of complex objects, when different qualities unite in the production of Emotion, to define the exact nature of that Emotion which we feel; but whether the general impreſſion we receive, is that of Gaiety, or Tenderneſs, or Melancholy, or Solemnity, or Elevation, or Terror, *&c.* we have never any difficulty of determining: and ſo ſtrong is our conviction of the dependence of the Emotions of Taſte upon ſome ſuch previous ſimple emotion, that whenever we endeavour to explain the Beauty or Sublimity of any object, we uniformly proceed by pointing out the intereſting or affecting quality in it, which is fitted to produce this previous emotion. It is not only impoſſible for us to imagine an object of Taſte, that is not an object of Emotion; but it is impoſſible to deſcribe any ſuch object, without reſting the deſcription upon that

quality, or thoſe qualities in it, which are productive of Simple Emotion.

2. Every man has had reaſon to obſerve a difference in his ſentiments, with regard to the beauty of particular objects from thoſe of other people, either in his conſidering certain objects as beautiful, which did not appear ſo to them, or in their conſidering certain objects as beautiful, which did not appear ſo to him. There is no inſtance of this more common than in the caſe of airs in muſic. In the firſt caſe of ſuch a difference of opinion, we generally endeavour to recollect, whether there is not ſome accidental aſſociation of pleaſure which we have with ſuch objects, and which affords us that delight which other people do not ſhare; and it not unfrequently happens, that we aſſign ſuch aſſociations as the cauſe of our pleaſure, and as our apology for differing from their opinion. In the other caſe, we generally take it for granted, that they who feel a beauty where we do not, have ſome pleaſing aſſociation with the object in queſtion, of which we are unconſcious, and which is accordingly productive to them of that delight in which we are unable to ſhare. In both caſes, although we may not diſcover what the particular aſſociation is, we do not fail to ſuppoſe that ſome ſuch aſſociation exiſts which is the foundation of the ſentiment of beauty, and to conſider this difference of opinion as ſufficiently accounted for on ſuch a ſuppoſition. This very natural kind of reaſoning could not, I think, take place, if we did not find from experience, that thoſe objects only, are

are productive of the Sentiment of Beauty, which are capable of exciting Emotion.

3. The different habits and occupations of life produce a ſimilar effect on the ſentiments of mankind with regard to the objects of Taſte, by their tendency to confine their ſenſibility to a certain claſs of objects, and to render all others indifferent to them. In our progreſs from infancy to manhood, how much do our ſentiments of beauty change with our years! how often, in the courſe of this progreſs, do we look back with contempt, or at leaſt with wonder, upon the taſtes of our earlier days, and the objects that gratified them! and how uniformly in all this progreſs do our opinions of Beauty coincide with the prevalent Emotions of our hearts, and with that change of ſenſibility which the progreſs of life occaſions! As ſoon as any claſs of objects loſes its importance in our eſteem, as ſoon as their preſence ceaſes to bring us pleaſure, or their abſence to give us pain, the beauty in which our infant imagination arrayed them diſappears, and begins to irradiate another claſs of objects, which we are willing to flatter ourſelves are more deſerving of ſuch ſentiments, but which have often no other value, than in their coincidence with thoſe new emotions that begin to ſwell in our breaſts. The little circle of infant beauty, contains no other objects than thoſe that can excite the affections of the child. The wider range which youth diſcovers, is ſtill limited by the ſame boundaries which nature has preſcribed to the affections of youth. It is only when we arrive at manhood, and ſtill more, when either the liberality of our education,

tion, or the original capacity of our minds, have led us to experience or to participate in all the affections of our nature, that we acquire that comprehenſive taſte, which can enable us to diſcover, and to reliſh, every ſpecies of Sublimity and Beauty.

It is eaſily obſervable, alſo, that beſides the natural progreſs of life, the habits of thought, which men acquire from the diverſity of their occupations, tend, in the ſame proportion to limit their ſenſe of Beauty or Sublimity, as they limit their emotions to a particular character or kind. The lover reads or hears with indifference, of all that is moſt ſublime in the hiſtory of ambition, and wonders only at the folly of mankind, who can ſacrifice their eaſe, their comforts, and all the beſt pleaſures of life, to the unſubſtantial purſuit of power. The man, whoſe life has been paſſed in the purſuits of commerce, and who has learned to eſtimate every thing by its value in money, laughs at the labours of the Philoſopher or the Poet, and beholds, with indifference, the moſt ſplendid purſuits of life, if they are not repaid by wealth. The anecdote of a late celebrated Mathematician, is well known, who read the Paradiſe Loſt, without being able to diſcover in it, any thing that was ſublime, but who ſaid that he could never read the queries at the end of Newton's Optics, without feeling his hair ſtand on end, and his blood run cold. There are thouſands who have read the old ballad of Chevy Chaſe, without having their imaginations inflamed with the ideas of military glory. It is the Brave only, who, in the peruſal of it, like the

the gallant Sir Philip Sydney, feel "their hearts 'moved, as by the ſound of a trumpet."

The effect of ſuch habits of mind upon the ſenſe of Beauty, may, in ſome degree, be obſerved in all the different claſſes of mankind; and there are probably few men, who have not had occaſion to remark how much the diverſity of taſtes correſponds to the diverſity of occupations, and, even in the moſt trifling things, how ſtrongly the ſentiments of Beauty, in different men, are expreſſive of their prevailing habits, or turn of mind. It is only in the higher ſtations accordingly, or in the liberal profeſſions of life, that we expect to find men either of a delicate or comprehenſive taſte. The inferior ſituations of life, by contracting the knowledge and the affections of men, within very narrow limits, produce inſenſibly a ſimilar contraction in their notions of the beautiful or the ſublime. The fineſt natural taſte, is ſeldom found able to withſtand that narrowneſs and inſenſibility of mind, which is perhaps neceſſarily acquired by the minute and unintereſting details of the mechanical arts; and they who have been doomed, by their profeſſions, to paſs their earlier years in populous and commercial cities, and in the narrow and ſelfiſh purſuits which prevail there, ſoon loſe that ſenſibility which is the moſt natural of all,—the ſenſibility to the beauties of the country; becauſe they loſe all thoſe ſentiments of tenderneſs and innocence, which are the foundation of much the greater part of the aſſociations we connect with the ſcenery of Nature.

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4. The difference of original character, or the natural tendency of our minds to particular kinds of Emotion, produces a ſimilar difference in our ſentiments of Beauty, and ſerves, in a very obvious manner, to limit our taſte to a certain claſs or character of objects. There are men, for inſtance, who, in all the varieties of external nature, find nothing beautiful but as it tends to awaken in them a ſentiment of ſadneſs, who meet the return of Spring with minds only prophetic of its decay, and who follow the decline of Autumn with no other remembrance than that the beauties of the year are gone. There are men, on the contrary, to whom every appearance of Nature is beautiful as awakening a ſentiment of gaiety;—to whom Spring and Autumn alike are welcome, becauſe they bring to them only different images of joy;—and who, even in the moſt deſolate and wintery ſcenes, are yet able to diſcover ſomething in which their hearts may rejoice. It is not, ſurely, that Nature herſelf is different, that ſo different effects are produced upon the imaginations of theſe men; but it is becauſe the original conſtitution of their minds has led them to different habits of Emotion,—becauſe their imaginations ſeize only thoſe expreſſions in nature, which are allied to their prevailing diſpoſitions, —and becauſe every other appearance is indifferent to them, but thoſe which fall in with the peculiar ſenſibility of their hearts. The gaiety of Nature alone, is beautiful to the cheerful man; its melancholy, to the man of ſadneſs; becauſe theſe alone are the qualities which accord with the Emotions they are accuſtomed to

to cheriſh, and in which their imaginations delight to indulge.

The ſame obſervation is equally applicable to the different taſtes of men in Poetry, and the reſt of the fine arts; and the productions that all men peculiarly admire, are thoſe which ſuit that peculiar ſtrain of Emotion, to which, from their original conſtitution, they are moſt ſtrongly diſpoſed. The ardent and gallant mind ſickens at the inſipidity of paſtoral, and the languor of elegiac poetry, and delights only in the great intereſts of the Tragic and the Epic Muſe. The tender and romantic peruſe, with indifference, the Iliad and the Paradiſe Loſt, and return with gladneſs, to thoſe favourite compoſitions, which are deſcriptive of the joys or ſorrows of Love. The gay and the frivolous, on the contrary, alike inſenſible to the ſentiments either of Tenderneſs or Magnanimity, find their delight in that cold but lively ſtyle of poetry, which has been produced by the gallantry of modern times, and which, in its principal features, is ſo ſtrongly characteriſtic of the paſſion itſelf. In general, thoſe kinds of poetry only are delightful or awaken us to any very ſenſible Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, which fall in with our peculiar habits of ſentiment or feeling; and if it rarely happens, that one ſpecies of poetry is reliſhed to the excluſion of every other, it ariſes only from this, that it is equally rare that one ſpecies of Emotion ſhould have ſo completely the dominion of the heart, as to exclude all Emotions of any other kind. In proportion, however, as our ſenſibility is weak, with regard to any claſs of objects,

objects, it is obſervable, that our ſenſe of Sublimity or Beauty in ſuch objects, is weak in the ſame proportion; and wherever it happens, (for it ſometimes does happen), that men, from their original conſtitution, are incapable of any one ſpecies of Emotion, I believe it will alſo be found, that they are equally inſenſible to all the Sublimity or Beauty which the reſt of the world find in the objects of ſuch Emotion.

5. Beſides the influence of permanent habits of thought, or of the diverſities of original diſpoſition upon our ſentiments of Beauty, every man muſt have had opportunity to obſerve, that the perception of Beauty depends alſo on the temporary ſenſibility of his mind; and that even objects of the moſt experienced Beauty, fail in exciting their uſual delight, when they occur to him in moments, when he is under the dominion of different emotions from thoſe with which he uſually regards them. In our ſeaſons of gaiety, we behold with indifference, the ſame objects which delight our imaginations, when we are under the impreſſions of tenderneſs or melancholy. In our ſeaſons of deſpondence, we turn with ſome kind of averſion, from the objects or the reflections that enchant us in our hours of gaiety. In the common hours of life, in the ſame manner, when we are either buſy, or unoccupied, and when our minds are free from every kind of ſenſibility, the objects of Taſte make but a feeble impreſſion upon us; and are either altogether neglected, or tacitly reſerved to another time, when we may be more in the temper to enjoy them. The huſbandman who goes out to obſerve the ſtate of his grounds, the man

man of buſineſs who walks forth to ruminate about his affairs, or the philoſopher, to reaſon or reflect, whatever their natural ſenſibilities may be, are at ſuch times inſenſible to every beauty that the ſcenery of nature may exhibit; nor do they begin to feel them, until they withdraw their attention from the particular objects of their thought, and abandon themſelves to the emotions which ſuch ſcenes may happen to inſpire.

There are even moments of liſtleſſneſs and languor, in which no objects of Taſte whatever, can excite their uſual delight, in which our favourite books, our favourite landſcapes, our favourite airs, ceaſe altogether to affect us; and when ſometimes we almoſt wonder what is the ſecret ſpell that hangs over our minds, and prevents us from enjoying the pleaſures that are within our reach. It is not that the objects of ſuch pleaſures are changed; it is not even that we have not the wiſh to enjoy them, for this we frequently attempt, and attempt in vain; but it is becauſe we come to them either with minds fatigued, and with ſpirits below their uſual tone, or under the influence of other feelings than are neceſſary for their enjoyment. Whenever we return to that ſtate of mind which is favourable to ſuch emotions, our delight returns with it, and the objects of ſuch pleaſures become as favourite as before.

II.

It is further obſervable, that our ſenſe of the Beauty or Sublimity of every object, depends upon that quality, or thoſe qualities of it which we conſider; and that objects of the moſt acknowledged beauty, ceaſe to affect us with ſuch emotions, when we make any of their indifferent or unintereſting qualities the object of our conſideration. There is no production of Taſte whatever, which has not many qualities of a very indifferent kind; and there can be no doubt, both that we have it in our power to make any of theſe qualities the object of our attention, and that we very often do ſo, without regarding any of thoſe qualities of emotion, upon which its Beauty or its Sublimity is founded. In ſuch caſes, I believe every one has felt, that the effect upon his mind correſponds to the quality he conſiders.

1. It is difficult, for inſtance, to enumerate the various qualities which may produce the Emotion of Beauty, in the ſtatues of the Venus de Medicis, or the Apollo Belvidere; yet it is undoubtedly poſſible for any man to ſee theſe maſter-pieces of ſtatuary, and yet feel no Emotion of Beauty. The delicacy, the modeſty, the timidity of the one, the grace, the dignity, the majeſty of the other, and in both, the inimitable art with which theſe characters are expreſſed, are, in general, the qualities which firſt impreſs themſelves upon the imagination of the

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ſpectator; yet the man of the beſt taſte may afterwards ſee them, without thinking of any ſuch expreſſions. He may obſerve their dimenſions, he may ſtudy their proportions, he may attend to the particular ſtate of their preſervation, the hiſtory of their diſcovery, or even the nature of the marble of which they are made. All theſe are as truly qualities of theſe ſtatues, as their majeſty or their grace, and may certainly, at particular times, happen to engage the attention of the man of the moſt refined taſte. That in ſuch caſes, no Emotion of Beauty would be felt, and that before it could be felt, it would be neceſſary for the ſpectator to withdraw his mind from the conſideration of ſuch unaffecting qualities, is too obvious to require any illuſtration.

The ſame obſervation is applicable to every other production of Taſte. There is no poem, no painting, no muſical compoſition, however beautiful or ſublime, that has not many qualities or attributes, that are altogether unintereſting, and which may not be made the object of attention at particular times, although in general they are left out of conſideration. The Inverſions of Milton, the compound Epithets of Thomſon, are as really qualities of their compoſitions, as the ſublimity of the one, or the tenderneſs of the other. The perſon who ſhould make ſuch qualities alone the object of his attention, in the peruſal of the Seaſons, or the Paradiſe Loſt, though he might certainly receive ſome inſtruction, would doubtleſs receive little delight; and if he were really capable of feeling

ing the Sublimity or Beauty which diſtinguiſh theſe compoſitions, it muſt be to other and more affecting qualities of them, that he muſt turn his regard. While theſe minute and unaffecting circumſtances were the objects of his attention, he could be conſcious of no greater emotion than what he might receive from the peruſal of the moſt unanimated proſe. It is in conſequence of this, that the exerciſe of Criticiſm never fails to deſtroy, for the time, our ſenſibility to the beauty of every compoſition, and that habits of this kind ſo generally end in deſtroying the ſenſibility of Taſte. They accuſtom us to conſider every compoſition in relation only to rules; they turn our attention from thoſe qualities upon which their effect is founded as objects of Taſte, to the conſideration of the principles by which this effect is attained, and inſtead of that deep and enthuſiaſtic delight which the perception of Beauty or Sublimity beſtows, they afford us at laſt no higher enjoyment than what ariſes from the obſervation of the dexterity of Art.

2. The effect of Familiarity, which has ſo often been obſerved, in diminiſhing our ſenſibility to the objects of Taſte, may ſerve alſo as an illuſtration of the ſame principle. This effect indeed is generally reſolved into the influence of habit, which in this, as in every other caſe, is ſuppoſed to diminiſh the ſtrength of our emotions; yet that it is not ſolely to be aſcribed to habit, ſeems evident from the following conſideration, that ſuch indifference is never permanent, and that there are times when the moſt familiar

miliar objects awaken us to the fulleſt ſenſe of their beauty. The neceſſity which we are under of conſidering all ſuch objects when familiar, in very different aſpects from thoſe in which they appear to us as objects of Beauty, and of attending only to their unaffecting qualities, may perhaps better account both for this gradual decay of our ſenſibility, and for its temporary returns.

When a man of any taſte, for inſtance, firſt ſettles in a romantic country, he is willing to flatter himſelf that he can never be ſatiated with its beauties, and that in their contemplation he ſhall continue to receive the ſame exquiſite delight. The aſpect in which he now ſees them, is ſolely that in which they are calculated to produce Emotion. The ſtreams are known to him only by their gentleneſs or their majeſty, the woods by their ſolemnity, the rocks by their awfulneſs or terror. In a very ſhort time, however, he is forced to conſider them in very different lights. They are uſeful to him for ſome purpoſes, either of occupation or amuſement. They ſerve as diſtinctions of different properties, or of different diviſions of the country. They become boundaries or land-marks, by which his knowledge of the neighbourhood is aſcertained. It is with theſe qualities that he hears them uſually ſpoken of by all who ſurround him. It is in this light that he muſt often ſpeak and think of them himſelf. It is with theſe qualities accordingly, that he comes at laſt inſenſibly to conſider them, in the common hours of his life. Even a circumſtance ſo trifling as the aſſignation of particular names,

names, contributes in a great degree to produce this effect; becauſe the uſe of ſuch names, in marking the particular ſituation or place of ſuch objects, naturally leads him to conſider the objects themſelves in no other light than that of their place or ſituation. It is with very different feelings that he muſt now regard the objects that were once ſo full of beauty. They now occur to his mind, only as topographical diſtinctions, and are beheld with the indifference ſuch qualities naturally produce. Their majeſty, their ſolemnity, their terror, *&c.* are gradually obſcured, under the maſs of unaffecting qualities with which he is obliged to conſider them; and excepting at thoſe times when either their appearances or their expreſſions are new, or when ſome other incident has awakened that tone or temper of thought with which their expreſſions agree, and when of conſequence he is diſpoſed to conſider them in the light of this expreſſion alone, he muſt be content at laſt to paſs his life without any perception of their beauty.

It is on the ſame account that the great and the opulent, become gradually ſo indifferent to thoſe articles of elegance or magnificence with which they are ſurrounded, and which are ſo effectual in exciting the admiration of other men. The man of inferior rank, whoſe ſituation prevents him from all familiarity with ſuch objects, ſees them in the light of their magnificence and elegance alone; he ſees them too, as ſigns of that happineſs and refined pleaſure, which men in his condition ſo uſually and ſo falſely attribute to thoſe of elevated rank; and he feels accordingly

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all that unmingled emotion of admiration which ſuch expreſſions are fitted to produce. But the poſſeſſor muſt often ſee them in different lights. Whatever may be their elegance or their beauty, they ſtill ſerve ſome end, or anſwer ſome purpoſe of his eſtabliſhment. They are deſtined to ſome particular uſe, or are ornaments of ſome particular place: They are articles in the furniture of ſuch a room, or ingredients in the compoſition of ſuch a ſcene: They were deſigned by ſuch an artiſt, executed after ſuch a model, or coſt ſuch a ſum of money. In ſuch, or in ſome other equally unintereſting light, he muſt frequently be obliged both to ſpeak and to think of them. In proportion as the habit of conſidering them in ſuch a light increaſes, his diſpoſition, or his opportunity to conſider them as objects of Taſte diminiſhes. Their elegance or their magnificence gradually diſappears, until at laſt he comes to regard them (excepting at particular times) with no farther emotion, than what he receives from the common furniture of his houſe. The application of the ſame obſervation to many more important ſources of our happineſs, is too obvious to require any illuſtration.

There is no man, in like manner acquainted with the hiſtory or the literature of antiquity, who has not felt his imagination inflamed by the moſt trifling circumſtances connected with ſuch periods. The names of the Ilyſſus, the Tiber, the Forum, the Capitol, *&c.* have a kind of eſtabliſhed grandeur in our apprehenſions, becauſe the only light in which we regard them, is that of their relation to thoſe paſt ſcenes of greatneſs. No man, however, is weak enough to believe,

that to the citizens of Athens, or of Rome, ſuch names were productive of ſimilar emotions. To him they undoubtedly conveyed no other ideas, than thoſe of the particular diviſions of the city in which he dwelt, and were heard of conſequence, with the ſame indifference that the citizens of London now hears of the Strand, or the Tower.

3. The influence of Faſhion, in producing ſo frequent revolutions in the ſentiments of men, with regard to the beauty of thoſe objects to which it extends, and in diſpoſing us to neglect or to deſpiſe at one time, the objects which we conſidered as beautiful before, may perhaps be explained upon the ſame principle. Faſhion may be conſidered in general as the cuſtom of the great. It is the dreſs, the furniture, the language, the manners of the great world, which conſtitute what is called the Faſhion in each of theſe articles, and which the reſt of mankind are in ſuch haſte to adopt, after their example. Whatever the real beauty or propriety of theſe articles may be, it is not in this light that we conſider them. They are the ſigns of that elegance and taſte, and ſplendour, which is ſo liberally attributed to elevated rank; they are aſſociated with the conſequence which ſuch ſituations beſtow; and they eſtabliſh a kind of external diſtinction between this envied ſtation, and thoſe humble and mortifying conditions of life, to which no man is willing to belong. It is in the light therefore of this connection only, that we are diſpoſed to conſider them; and they accordingly affect us with the ſame emotion of delight, which we receive from

from the conſideration of taſte or elegance, in more permanent inſtances. As ſoon, however, as this aſſociation is deſtroyed, as ſoon as the caprice or the inconſtancy of the great have introduced other uſages in their place, our opinion of their beauty is immediately deſtroyed. The quality which was formerly ſo pleaſing or ſo intereſting in them, the quality which alone we conſidered, is now appropriated to other objects, and our admiration readily transfers itſelf to thoſe newer forms, which have riſen into diſtinction from the ſame cauſe. The forſaken Faſhion, whatever may be its real or intrinſic beauty, falls for the preſent at leaſt, into neglect or contempt; becauſe, either our admiration of it was founded only upon that quality which it has loſt, or becauſe it has now deſcended to the inferior ranks, and is of conſequence aſſociated with ideas of meanneſs and vulgarity. A few years bring round again the ſame Faſhion. The ſame aſſociation attends it, and our admiration is renewed as before. It is on the ſame account, that they who are moſt liable to the ſeduction of Faſhion, are people on whoſe minds the ſlighter aſſociations have a ſtrong effect. A plain man is incapable of ſuch aſſociations: a man of ſenſe is above them; but the young and the frivolous, whoſe principles of Taſte are either unformed, or whoſe minds are unable to maintain any ſettled opinions, are apt to loſe ſight of every other quality in ſuch objects, but their relation to the practice of the great, and of courſe, to ſuffer their ſentiments of beauty to vary with the caprice of this practice. It is the ſame cauſe which attaches the old to the faſhions of their youth. They are aſ-

ſociated with the memory of their better days, with a thouſand recollections of happineſs and gaiety, and heartfelt pleaſures, which they now no longer feel. The Faſhions of modern times have no ſuch pleaſing aſſociations to them. They are connected to them, only with ideas of thoughtleſs gaiety, or childiſh caprice. It is the Faſhions of their youth alone, therefore, that they conſider as beautiful.

III.

It may farther be obſerved, that the dependence of Taſte upon Senſibility, or the neceſſity of ſome ſimple Emotion being excited, before the Beauty or Sublimity of any object is perceived, is ſo far from being remote from general obſervation, that it is the foundation of ſome of the moſt common judgments we form with regard to the characters of men.

1. When we are but ſlightly acquainted with any perſon, and have had no opportunities of knowing the particular nature of his ſentiments or turn of mind, we never venture to pronounce, or even to gueſs with regard to his Taſte; and if, in ſuch a ſtage of our acquaintance, we find that his opinions of Beauty are very different from our own, we are ſo far from being ſurprized at it, that we ſet ourſelves very deliberately to account for it, either by recalling to mind thoſe habits or occupations of his life which may have led him to different kinds of emotion, or by ſuppoſing that his natural ſenſibility is very different from our own. On the other hand, when we are well acquainted

acquainted with any perſon, and know intimately the particular turn or ſenſibility of his mind, although we ſhould never have happened to know his ſentiments of Sublimity or Beauty, we yet venture very boldly to pronounce, whether any particular claſs of objects will affect him with ſuch ſentiments or not. The foundation of our judgment, in ſuch caſes, is the agreement or diſagreement of ſuch objects, with the particular turn or character of his affections; and if we are well acquainted with the perſon, our judgment is ſeldom wrong. In the ſame manner, although we are altogether unacquainted with any perſon, yet if we are informed of his particular Taſte, or of his favourite objects of Beauty or Sublimity, we not only feel ourſelves diſpoſed to conclude from thence, with regard to his particular turn or character of mind; but if the inſtances are ſufficiently numerous, we in general conclude right. It is ſcarcely poſſible for any man to read the works of a Poet, without forming ſome judgment of his character and affections as a man, or without concluding, that the magnanimity, the tenderneſs, the gaiety, or the melancholy, diſtinguiſhed him in private life, which characteriſe the ſcenes or deſcriptions of his works. I am far from contending that ſuch judgments, in general, are juſt; not only from the raſhneſs with which they ſo commonly are formed, but ſtill more, in thoſe caſes where we reaſon from any perſon's Taſte, from the impoſſibility of knowing whether this Taſte is genuine, or whether it is founded upon ſome accidental aſſociations. All that I mean to conclude is, that ſuch judgments are a proof of the connection between Taſte and Senſibility;

bility; and that they could not be formed, unleſs we found from experience, that no qualities affect us with the Pleaſures of Taſte, but ſuch as are productive of ſome ſimple Emotion.

2. It is farther to be obſerved, that the ſenſe of the dependence of the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, upon the accidental or temporary diſpoſition of the mind, is alſo very ſtrongly expreſſed, both in common conduct and in common converſation. To a man under ſome preſent impreſſion of joy, we ſhould not venture to appeal with regard to the beauty of any melancholy or pathetic compoſition. To a man under the dominion of ſorrow, we ſhould much leſs preſume to preſent even the moſt beautiful compoſition, which contained only images of joy. In both caſes, we ſhould feel, that the compoſitions in queſtion demanded different emotions from thoſe that the perſons had in their power to beſtow; that while their preſent diſpoſitions continued, there was no chance of the compoſition's being intereſting to them; and if we really wiſhed to know their opinions, we would naturally wait till we found them in ſuch a diſpoſition as was favourable to the emotions to which either of the compoſitions was addreſſed.

When any poem, or painting, or ſcene in nature peculiarly affects us, we are generally in haſte to ſhew it to ſome friend, whoſe taſte we know is ſimilar to our own; and our minds are not fully ſatiated with its beauties, until we are able to unite with our own peculiar emotion, that pleaſing ſurpriſe which we participate with one, to whom it is new, and that ſentiment of gladneſs,

gladneſs, which it is ſo natural to feel, when we find that we have been able to communicate delight. It ſometimes happens, however, that the perſon to whom we ſhew it, does not feel the pleaſure we expected. In ſuch a caſe, though we are a little ſurpriſed, we are not much diſappointed. We tell him, that he happens not to be in the humour to be pleaſed; that at another time we are ſure he will feel its beauty; and though we ſhould not happen to know what is the peculiar cauſe of his indifference, we yet ſatisfy ourſelves, that there is ſome cauſe which prevents him from the indulgence of the particular emotion which the ſcene or the compoſition demands, and which we know he is in general diſpoſed to indulge. It happens, accordingly, if we are really well acquainted with the perſon, and if this beauty is not founded upon ſome particular aſſociation of our own, that our expectation is gratified, and that when he returns to his ordinary temper of mind, he becomes ſenſible to all the beauty or ſublimity which we had found in it. Many other inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced. In all caſes, I think, where we diſcover in other people a weaker ſenſe with regard to the beauty of particular objects than in ourſelves, and when we can recollect no accidental aſſociation which may account for the ſuperiority of our own emotion. We are naturally inclined to attribute it either to ſome temporary occupation or embarraſſment of their minds when ſuch objects were preſented to them, or if we find that this was not the caſe, to ſome original deficiency in the ſenſibility of their hearts. To ſay that a man has no feelings of tenderneſs

or magnanimity, accounts to us at once for his want of ſenſibility to the beauty of any actions or ſpecies of compoſition, which are founded on ſuch emotions. In the ſame manner, to ſay that at any particular time he was under the dominion of oppoſite feelings, as fully accounts to us for his inſenſibility at ſuch a time to the beauty of ſuch actions or compoſitions. I apprehend, that theſe very natural and very common judgments could not be formed, unleſs we found from experience, that thoſe qualities only are felt as beautiful or ſublime, which are found to produce emotion.

IV.

The propoſition which I have now endeavoured to illuſtrate, might be illuſtrated from a variety of other conſiderations, and particularly from the nature of the Fine Arts. The object of theſe Arts is to produce the Emotions of Taſte; and it might eaſily be ſhown,

1. That the only ſubjects that are in themſelves proper for the imitation of theſe Arts, are ſuch as are productive of ſome ſpecies of Simple Emotion:

2. That when theſe ſubjects are of a contrary kind, the method by which alone they can be rendered either beautiful or ſublime, is by the addition of ſome intereſting or affecting quality:

3. That the extent, as well as the power of the different fine arts, in producing ſuch emotions, is

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in proportion to the capacity which they afford the artiſt of making ſuch additions; and that in this reſpect, Poetry, by employing the inſtrument of language, by means of which it can expreſs every quality of mind as well as of body, has a decided ſuperiority over the reſt of theſe arts, which are limited to the expreſſion of the qualities of body alone.

Theſe conſiderations, however, beſides their being familiar to thoſe who have reflected upon theſe ſubjects, would neceſſarily lead to diſcuſſions far beyond the limits of theſe Eſſays. The reader, who would wiſh to ſee ſome of theſe principles illuſtrated, will find it very fully and very beautifully done in Dr. Beattie's Eſſays upon Poetry and Muſic.

If the preceding illuſtrations are juſt: if it is found, that no qualities are felt, either as beautiful or ſublime, but ſuch as accord with the habitual or temporary ſenſibility of our minds; that objects of the moſt acknowledged beauty fail to excite their uſual emotions, when we regard them in the light of any of their unintereſting or unaffecting qualities; and that our common judgments of the characters of men are founded upon this experience, it ſeems, that there can be no doubt of the truth of the propoſition itſelf.

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SECTION III.

IF it is true, that thoſe trains of thought which attend the Emotions of Taſte, are uniformly diſtinguiſhed by ſome general principle of connection, it ought to be found, that no Compoſition of objects or qualities, in fact, produces ſuch emotions, in which this Unity of character or of emotion is not preſerved. This propoſition alſo may be illuſtrated from the moſt ſuperficial review of the Principles of Compoſition, in the different Arts of Taſte.

I.

There is no man of common Taſte, who has not often lamented that confuſion of expreſſion which ſo frequently takes place, even in the moſt beautiful ſcenes of real Nature, and which prevents him from indulging to the full, the peculiar emotion which the ſcene itſelf is fitted to inſpire. The cheerfulneſs of the morning is often diſturbed by circumſtances of minute or laborious occupation,—the ſolemnity of noon by noiſe and buſtling induſtry,—the tranquillity and melancholy of evening by vivacity and vulgar gaiety. It is ſeldom even that any unity of character is preſerved among the inanimate objects of ſuch ſcenery. The ſublimeſt ſituations are often diſfigured, by objects that we feel unworthy of them,—by the traces of cultivation, or attempts toward improvement,—by the

the poverty of their woods, or of their ſtreams, or ſome other of their great conſtituent features, —by appearances of uniformity or regularity, that almoſt induce the idea of art. The loveliеſt ſcenes, in the ſame manner, are frequently diſturbed by unaccording circumſtances, by the ſigns of cultivation,—the regularity of incloſures,—the traces of manufactures, and what is worſe than all, by the preſumptuous embelliſhments of fantaſtic Taſte. Amid this confuſion of incidents, the general character of the ſcene is altogether loſt; we ſcarcely know to what claſs of objects to give our attention; and having viewed it with aſtoniſhment, rather than with delight, we at laſt buſy ourſelves in imaginary improvements, and in conceiving what its beauty might be, if every feature were removed which now ſerves to interrupt its expreſſion, and to diminiſh its effect.

What we thus attempt in imagination, it is the buſineſs of the art of Gardening to execute; and the great ſource of the ſuperiority of its productions to the original ſcenes in nature, conſiſts in the purity and harmony of its compoſition, in the power which the artiſt enjoys, to remove from his landſcape whatever is hoſtile to its effect, or unſuited to its character, and by ſelecting only ſuch circumſtances as accord with the general expreſſion of the ſcene, to awaken an emotion more full, more ſimple, and more harmonious than any we can receive from the ſcenes of Nature itſelf.

It is by this rule accordingly, that the excellence of all ſuch compoſitions is determined. In real Nature, we often forgive, or are willing to forget ſlight inaccuracies, or trifling inconſiſtencies; but in ſuch productions of deſign, we expect and require more perfect correſpondence. Every object that is not ſuited to the character of the ſcene, or that has not an effect in ſtrengthening the expreſſion by which it is diſtinguiſhed, we condemn as an intruſion, and conſider as a reproach upon the taſte of the artiſt. When this expectation, on the contrary, is fully gratified, when the circumſtances of the ſcenery are all ſuch as accord with the peculiar emotion which the ſcene is fitted to inſpire, when the hand of the artiſt diſappears, and the embelliſhments of his fancy preſs themſelves upon our belief, as the voluntary profuſion of Nature, we immediately pronounce that the compoſition is perfect, we acknowledge that he has attained the end of his art; and in yielding ourſelves up to the emotion which his compoſition demands, we afford him the moſt convincing mark of our applauſe. In the power which the art of gardening thus poſſeſſes, in common with the other fine arts, of withdrawing from its imitations whatever is inconſiſtent with their expreſſion, and of adding whatever may contribute to ſtrengthen, or to extend their effect, conſiſts the great ſuperiority which it poſſeſſes over the originals from which they are copied.

II. The

II.

The art of Landſcape painting is yet ſuperior in its effect, from the capacity which the artiſt enjoys, of giving both greater extent and greater unity to his compoſition. In the art of gardening, the great materials of the ſcene are provided by Nature, and the artiſt muſt ſatisfy himſelf with that degree of expreſſion which ſhe has beſtowed. In a landſcape, on the contrary, the painter has the choice of the circumſtances he is to repreſent, and can give whatever force or extent he pleaſes to the expreſſion he wiſhes to convey. In gardening, the materials of the ſcene are few, and thoſe few unwieldy; and the artiſt muſt often content himſelf with the reflection, that he has given the beſt diſpoſition in his power to the ſcanty and intractable materials of Nature. In a landſcape, on the contrary, the whole range of ſcenery is before the eye of the painter. He may ſelect from a thouſand ſcenes, the circumſtances which are to characteriſe a ſingle compoſition, and may unite into one expreſſion, the ſcattered features with which Nature has feebly marked a thouſand ſituations. The momentary effects of light or ſhade, the fortunate incidents which chance ſometimes throws in, to improve the expreſſion of real ſcenery, and which can never again be recalled, he has it in his power to perpetuate upon his canvas: Above all, the occupations of men, ſo important in determining, or in heightening the characters of Nature, and which are ſeldom compatible

ble with the ſcenes of gardening, fall eaſily within the reach of his imitation, and afford him the means of producing both greater ſtrength and greater unity of expreſſion, than is to be found either in the rude, or in the embelliſhed ſtate of real ſcenery.

While it is by the invention of ſuch circumſtances that we eſtimate the genius of the artiſt, it is by their compoſition that his Taſte is uniformly determined. The mere aſſemblage of pictureſque incidents, the moſt unimproved Taſte will condemn. Some general principle is univerſally demanded, ſome decided expreſſion, to which the meaning of the ſeveral parts may be referred, and which by affording us, as it were, the key of the ſcene, may lead us to feel from the whole of the compoſition, that full and undiſturbed emotion which we are prepared to indulge. It is this purity and ſimplicity of compoſition, accordingly, which has uniformly diſtinguiſhed the great maſters of the art, from the mere copiers of Nature. It is by their adherence to it, that their fame has been attained; and the names of Salvator, and Claude Lorrain, can ſcarcely be mentioned, without bringing to mind the peculiar character of their compoſitions, and the different emotions which their repreſentations of Nature are deſtined to produce.

It is not, however, on our firſt acquaintance with this art, that we either diſcover its capacity, or feel its effects; and perhaps the progreſs of Taſte, in this reſpect, may afford a further illuſtration of the great and fundamental Principle

ciple of Compoſition. What we firſt underſtand of painting is, that it is a ſimple art of imitation, and what we expect to find in it, is the repreſentation of the common ſcenes of nature that ſurround us. It is with ſome degree of ſurpriſe, accordingly, that we at firſt obſerve the different ſcenery with which the Painter preſents us, and with an emotion rather of wonder, than of delight, that we gaze at a ſtyle of landſcape, which has ſo little reſemblance to the ordinary views to which we are accuſtomed. In the copy of a real ſcene, we can diſcover and admire the ſkill of the artiſt; but in the repreſentation of deſart or of deſolate proſpects, in appearances of Solitude or Tempeſt, we perceive no traces of imitation, and wonder only at the perverſity of Taſte, which could have led to the choice of ſo diſagreeable ſubjects.

As ſoon, however, as from the progreſs of our own ſenſibility, or from our acquaintance with poetical compoſition, we begin to connect expreſſion with ſuch views of Nature, we begin alſo to underſtand and to feel the beauties of landſcape painting. It is with a different view that we now conſider it. It is not for imitation we look, but for character. It is not the art, but the genius of the Painter, which now gives value to his compoſitions; and the language he employs is found not only to ſpeak to the eye, but to affect the imagination and the heart. It is not now a ſimple copy which we ſee, nor is our Emotion limited to the cold pleaſure which ariſes from the perception of accurate Imitation. It is a creation of Fancy with which the artiſt preſents

preſents us, in which only the greater expreſſions of Nature are retained, and where more intereſting emotions are awakened, than thoſe which we experience from the uſual tameneſs of common ſcenery. In the ſame proportion in which we thus diſcover the expreſſion of landſcape, we begin to collect the principles of its compoſition. The crowd of incidents which uſed to dazzle our earlier Taſte, as expreſſive both of the ſkill and of the invention of the artiſt, begin to appear to us, as inconſiſtence or confuſion. When our hearts are affected, we ſeek only for objects congenial to our emotion; and the Simplicity, which we uſed to call the Poverty of landſcape, begins now to be welcome to us, as permitting us to indulge, without interruption, thoſe intereſting trains of thought which the character of the ſcene is fitted to inſpire. As our knowledge of the expreſſions of Nature increaſes, our ſenſibility to the beauty or to the defects of compoſition becomes more keen, until at laſt our admiration attaches itſelf only to thoſe greater productions of the art, in which one pure and unmingled character is preſerved, and in which no feature is admitted, which may prevent it from falling upon the heart, with one full and harmonious effect.

In this manner, the object of painting is no ſooner diſcovered, than the unity of expreſſion is felt to be the great ſecret of its power; the ſuperiority which it at laſt aſſumes over the ſcenery of Nature, is found to ariſe in one important reſpect, from the greater purity and ſimplicity which its compoſition can attain; and perhaps

haps this ſimple rule comprehends all that Criticiſm can preſcribe for the regulation of this delightful art.

III.

But whatever may be the ſuperiority of painting to the originals from which it is copied, it is ſtill limited, in compariſon of that which Poetry enjoys. The Painter addreſſes himſelf to the Eye. The Poet ſpeaks to the Imagination. The painter can repreſent no other qualities of Nature, but thoſe which we diſcern by the ſenſe of ſight. The Poet can blend with thoſe, all the qualities which we perceive by means of our other ſenſes. The Painter can ſeize only one moment of exiſtence, and can repreſent no other qualities of objects than what this ſingle moment affords. The whole hiſtory of Nature is within the reach of the Poet, the varying appearances which its different productions aſſume in the progreſs of their growth and decay, and the powerful effects which are produced by the contraſt of theſe different aſpects or expreſſions. The Painter can give to the objects of his ſcenery, only the viſible and material qualities which are diſcerned by the eye, and muſt leave the interpretation of their expreſſion to the imagination of the ſpectator; but the Poet can give animation to whatever he deſcribes. All the ſublimity and beauty of the moral and intellectual world are at his diſpoſal; and by beſtowing on the inanimate objects of his ſcenery the characters and affections of mind, he can produce at once an ex-

preſſion which every capacity may underſtand, and every heart may feel. Whatever may be the advantage which painting enjoys, from the greater clearneſs and preciſion of its images, it is much more than balanced by the unbounded powers which the inſtrument of language affords to the Poet, both in the ſelection of the objects of his deſcription, and in the deciſion of their expreſſion.

It is accordingly, by the preſervation of Unity of character or expreſſion, that the excellence of poetical deſcription is determined; and perhaps the ſuperior advantages which the Poet enjoys in the choice of his materials, renders our demand for its obſervance more rigid, than in any of the other arts of Taſte. In real Nature, we willingly accommodate ourſelves to the ordinary defects of ſcenery, and accept with gratitude, thoſe ſingular aſpects in which ſome predominant character is tolerably preſerved. In the compoſitions of Gardening, we make allowance for the narrrow limits within which the invention of the artiſt is confined, and are diſſatisfied only when great inconſiſtencies are retained. Even in painting, we are ſtill mindful that it is the objects only of one ſenſe that the artiſt can repreſent; and rather lament his reſtraints, than condemn his Taſte, if our minds are not fully impreſſed with the emotions he ſtudies to raiſe, or if the different incidents of his compoſition do not fully accord in the degree, as well as in the nature of their expreſſion. But the deſcriptions of the Poet can claim no ſuch indulgence. With the capacity of blending in

in his compoſition the objects of every ſenſe; with the paſt and the future, as well as the preſent, in his power; above all, with the mighty ſpell of mind at his command, with which he can raiſe every object that he touches, into life and ſentiment, we feel that he is unworthy of his art, if our imaginations are not ſatiated with his compoſition, and if in the chaſtity, as well as the power of his expreſſion, he has not gratified the demand of our hearts.

It would be an unpleaſing, and indeed an unneceſſary taſk, to illuſtrate this obſervation, by the defects or abſurdities of Poets of inferior genius, or imperfect taſte. It will perhaps be more uſeful, to produce a few inſtances of deſcription from ſome of the greateſt Poets, in which very trifling circumſtances ſerve to deſtroy, or at leaſt to diminiſh their effect, when they do not fully coincide with the nature of the emotion which the deſcriptions are intended to raiſe.

In that fine paſſage in the ſecond book of the Georgics, in which Virgil celebrates the praiſes of his native country, after theſe fine lines,

Hic ver aſſiduum atque alienis menſibus æſtas.
Bis gravidæ pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbos:
At rabidæ tigres abſunt, et ſæva leonum
Semina, nec miſeros fallunt aconita legentes,
Nec rapit immenſos orbes per humum, neque tanto
Squameus in ſpiram tractu ſe colligit anguis.

There is no reader whoſe enthuſiaſm is not checked by the cold and proſaic line which follows:

Adde tot egregias urbes, operumque laborem.

The tameneſs and vulgarity of the tranſition diſſipates at once the emotion we had ſhared with the Poet, and reduces him in our opinion to the level of a mere deſcriber.

The effect of the following nervous and beautiful lines in the concluſion of the ſame book, is nearly deſtroyed by a ſimilar defect. After theſe lines,

Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,
Hanc Remus et frater; ſic fortis Etruria crevit,
Scilicet et rerum facta eſt pulcherrima Roma.

We little expect the following ſpiritleſs concluſion:

Septemque una ſibi muro circumdedit arces.

There is a ſtill more ſurpriſing inſtance of this fault in one of the moſt pathetic paſſages of the whole poem, in the deſcription of the diſeaſe among the cattle, which concludes the third Georgic. The paſſage is as follows:

Ecce autem duro fumans ſub vomere taurus
Concidit: *et mixtum ſpumis vomit ore cruorem.*
Extremoſque ciet gemitus. It triſtis arator
Mœrentem abjungens fraterna morte juvencum,
Atque opere in medio defixa relinquit aratra.

The

The unhappy image in the ſecond line is leſs calculated to excite compaſſion than diſguſt, and is ſingularly ill ſuited to that tone of tenderneſs and delicacy which the Poet has every where elſe ſo ſucceſsfully maintained, in deſcribing the progreſs of this loathſome diſeaſe.

In the ſpeech of Agamemnon to Idomeneus, in the fourth book of the Iliad, a circumſtance is introduced altogether inconſiſtent both with the dignity of the ſpeech, and the majeſty of Epic Poetry.

> Divine Idomeneus! what thanks we owe
> To worth like thine, what praiſe ſhall we beſtow!
> To Thee the foremoſt honours are decreed
> Firſt in the fight, and every graceful deed.
> For this, in banquets, when the generous bowls
> Reſtore our blood, and raiſe the warriors ſouls,
> Tho' all the reſt, with ſtated rules be bound,
> Unmix'd, unmeaſur'd are thy goblets crown'd.

Inſtances of the ſame defect may be found in the compariſon of the ſudden cure of Mars's wound to the coagulation of curds,—in that of Ajax retreating before the Trojans to an aſs driven by boys from a field of corn,—in the compariſon of an obſtinate combat between the Greeks and the Trojans, to the ſtubborn ſtruggle between two peaſants, about the limits of their reſpective grounds,—in that of Ajax flying from ſhip to ſhip, to encounter the Trojans, to a horſeman riding ſeveral horſes at once, and ſhowing his dexterity, by vaulting from one to another.

There

There is a ſimilar fault in the two following paſſages from Milton, where the introduction of trifling and ludicrous circumſtances, diminiſhes the Beauty of the one, and the Sublimity of the other,

Now Morn her roſy ſteps in the eaſtern clime
Advancing, ſow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd: *ſo cuſtom'd, for his ſleep*
Was airy light from pure digeſtion bred
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only ſound
Of leaves, and fuming rills, Aurora's fan
Lightly diſpers'd, and the ſhrill matin ſong
Of birds on every bough.

Book v.

They ended parle, and both addreſs'd for fight
Unſpeakable: for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conſpicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to ſuch height
Of godlike power? for likeſt gods they ſeem'd,
Stood they or mov'd, in ſtature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.
Now wav'd their fiery ſwords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad ſuns their ſhields
Blaz'd oppoſite, while Expectation ſtood
In horror; *from each hand with ſpeed retired*
Where erſt was thickeſt fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unſafe within the wind
Of ſuch commotion.

Book vi.

In the following paſſage from the ſixth book of Lucan's Pharſalia, where he deſcribes the incantations of the witch Erycho, and of whoſe voice he had before ſaid with great ſublimity,

Omne

Omne nefas ſuperi, prima jam voce precanti
Concedunt, carmenque timent audire ſecundum.

in labouring to increaſe the terror of the reader, he has rendered his deſcription almoſt ludicrous, by accumulating images which ſerve only to confuſe, and which in themſelves have ſcarcely any other relation than that of mere noiſe.

Tum vox Lethæos cunctis pollentior herbis
Excantare Deos, confundit murmura primum
Diſſona, et humanæ multum diſcordia linguæ.
Latratus habet illa canum, gemituſque luporum
Quod trepidus bubo, quod ſtrix nocturna querentur
Quod ſtrident, ululantque feræ, quod ſibilat anguis,
Exprimit, et planctus illiſæ cautibus undæ
Silvarumque ſonum, fractæque tonitrua nubis;
Tot rerum vox una fuit.——

Such a collection of unaccording images is ſcarcely leſs abſurd than the following deſcription of the Nightingale, by Marini:

Una vice pennuta, un ſuon' volante
E veſtito di penne, un vivo fiato,
Una piuma canora, un canto alato,
Un ſpirituel che d' harmonia compoſto
Vive in anguſte viſcere naſcoſto.

Even leſs obvious inconſiſtencies are ſufficient to diminiſh the effect of poetical deſcription, when they do not perfectly coincide with the general emotion.

There

There is a circumſtance introduced in the following paſſage from Horace, which is liable to this cenſure:

Solvitur acris Hyems, grata vice veris et Favoni,
Trahuntque ficcas machinæ carinas,
Ac neque jam ſtabulis gaudet pecus, aut arator igni,
Nec prata canis albicant pruinis.
Jam Cytherea choros ducit Venus, imminente luna,
Junctæque Nymphis Gratiæ decentes
Alterno terram quatiunt pede.——

The image contained in the ſecond line is obviouſly improper. It ſuggeſts ideas of labour, and difficulty, and art, and has no correſpondence with that emotion of gladneſs with which we behold the return of the Spring, and which is ſo ſucceſsfully maintained by the gay and pleaſing imagery in the reſt of the paſſage.

In a deſcription of the morning, in the charming poem of the Minſtrel, there is a circumſtance to which the ſeverity of Criticiſm might object upon the ſame principle.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark,
Crown'd with her pail, the tripping milkmaid ſings,
The whiſtling plowman ſtalks a-field, and hark!
Down the rough ſlope the ponderous waggon rings.

The image in the laſt line, though undoubtedly a ſtriking one in itſelf, and very beautifully deſcribed, is yet improper, as it is inconſiſtent both with the period of ſociety, and the ſcenery of the country to which the Minſtrel refers.

There

There is a ſimilar error in the following fine deſcription from Shakeſpeare.

The current, that with gentle murmur glides
Thou know'ſt, being ſtopp'd, impatiently doth rage,
But when his fair courſe is not hindered,
He makes ſweet muſic with th' enamel'd ſtones,
Giving a gentle kiſs to every ſedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage:
And ſo by many winding nooks he ſtrays
With willing ſport to the wild ocean.

The pleaſing perſonification which we attribute to a brook, is founded upon the faint belief of voluntary motion, and is immediately checked, when the Poet deſcends to any minute or particular reſemblance.

Even in that inimitable deſcription which Virgil has given of a ſtorm, in the firſt book of the Georgics, a very accurate Taſte may perhaps diſcover ſome ſlight deficiencies.

Sæpe etiam immenſum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et fœdam glomerant tempeſtatem imbribus atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes. Ruit arduus æther
Et pluvia ingenti ſata læta, boumque labores,
Diluit. Implentur foſſæ, et cava flumina creſcunt
Cum ſonitu, fervetque fretis ſpirantibus æquor.
Ipſe pater, media nimborum in nocte, coruſca
Fulmina molitur dextra, quo maxuma motu
Terra tremit: fugere feræ, et mortalia corda
Per gentes humiles ſtravit pavor. Ille flagranti
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit: ingeminant Auſtri, et denſiſſimus imber.

If there was any paſſage to which I would object in theſe wonderful lines, it would be to thoſe that are marked in Italics. I acknowledge indeed, that the "pluvia ingenti ſata læta boum-"que labores diluit," is defenſible from the connection of the imagery with the ſubject of the poem; but the "implentur foſſæ" is both an unneceſſary and a degrading circumſtance, when compared with the magnificent effects that are deſcribed in the reſt of the paſſage.

I ſhall conclude theſe illuſtrations, with two paſſages, deſcriptive of the ſame ſcene, from different Poets, in which the effects of imperfect and of harmonious compoſition are ſtrikingly exemplified.

In the "Argonautica" of Apollonius Rhodius, when Medea is deſcribed in a ſtate of deep agitation between her unwillingneſs to betray her father, and her deſire to ſave her lover Jaſon, the anxiety of her mind is expreſſed by the following contraſt, of which I give a literal tranſlation:

"The night now covered the earth with her "ſhade; and in the open ſea, the pilots, upon "their decks, obſerved the ſtar of Orion. The "travellers and the watchmen ſlumbered. Even "the grief of mothers who had loſt their chil-"dren, was ſuſpended by ſleep. In the cities "there was neither heard the cry of dogs, nor "the noiſe nor murmur of men. Silence reign-"ed in the midſt of darkneſs. Medea alone "knew not the charms of this peaceful night,

"ſo

" ſo deeply was her ſoul impreſſed with fears " for Jaſon."

Virgil deſcribes a ſimilar ſituation as follows :

Nox erat, et placidum carpebant feſſa ſoporem
Corpora per terras, ſylvæque et ſæva quierant
Æquora : quum medio volvuntur ſidera lapſu
Quum tacet omnis ager : pecudes, pictæque volucres,
Quæque lacus late liquidos, quæque aſpera dumis
Rura tenent, ſomno poſitæ ſub nocte ſilenti
Lenibant curas, et corda oblita laborum :
At non infelix animi Phæniſſa.

" On voit ici, (ſays M. Marmontel, with his " uſual taſte and diſcernment), non ſeulement " la ſuperiorité du talent, la vie, et l'ame re- " pandues dans une poëſie harmonieuſe, et du " coloris le plus pur, mais ſingulierement encor " la ſuperiorité du gout. Dans la peinture du " poëte Grec, il y a des details inutiles, il y " en a de contraires à l'effet du tableau. Les " obſervations des pilotes, dans le ſilence de la " nuit, portent eux-mêmes le caractére de la vi- " gilance et de l'inquietude, et ne contraſtent " point avec le trouble de Medée. L'image " d'une mere qui a perdu ſes enfants eſt faite " pour diſtraire de celle d'une amante ; elle en " affoiblit l'interét, et le poëte en la lui oppo- " ſant, eſt allé contre ſon deſſein ; au lieu que, " dans le tableau de Virgile, tout eſt réduit à " l'unité. C'eſt la nature entiere, dans le calme " et dans le ſommeil, tandis que la malheureuſe " Didon veille ſeule, et ſe livre en proie à tous

" les

" les tourments de l'amour. Enfin, dans le " poëte Grec, le cri des chiens, le ſommeil des " portiers, ſont des details minutieux et indig- " nes de l'epopée, au lieu que dans Virgile tout " eſt noble et peint à grands traits: huit vers " embraſſent la nature."

Encyclopedie, voc. IMITATION.

In theſe illuſtrations of the neceſſity of unity of expreſſion, for the production of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty, I have chiefly confined myſelf to ſuch inſtances in poetry, as are deſcriptive of natural ſcenery, becauſe they are moſt within the obſervation of that claſs of readers, to whom any illuſtrations on this point are neceſſary. The ſame principle extends with equal force, to every other branch of poetical imitation, to the deſcription of the characters, the ſentiments and the paſſions of men: And one great ſource of the ſuperiority which ſuch imitations have over the originals from which they are copied, conſiſts in theſe caſes, as well as the former, in the power which the artiſt enjoys, of giving an unity of character to his deſcriptions, which is not to be found in real Nature. The illuſtration of this point, however, as well as of the general fact, that all ſuch deſcriptions are defective, in which this unity is not preſerved, I muſt leave to the reader's own obſervation. In the ſame view, I leave the conſideration of the effect of Contraſt; a principle which may at firſt ſeem adverſe to theſe concluſions, but which in fact is one of the ſtrongeſt confirmations of them. The reader who is accuſtomed to ſuch ſpeculations, need not be reminded that the

the real end of Contraſt is to ſtrengthen the effect of the general Emotion,—that its propriety is determined by the nature of that Emotion,—that it is juſtly applied only in thoſe caſes where the Emotion is violent, and demands relief, or faint and requires ſupport, or long continued and needs repoſe,—and that in all caſes where it exceeds theſe limits, or where it does not ſerve to invigorate the character of the Compoſition, it ſerves only to obſtruct or to diminiſh its effect; and the reader to whom theſe principles are new, may find amuſement in verifying them.

IV.

The unity of character which is thus demanded in poetical deſcription, for the production of the Emotions of Taſte, is demanded alſo in every ſpecies of poetical Compoſition, whatever may be its extent.

In deſcribing the events of life, it is the buſineſs of the hiſtorian to repreſent them as they really happened; to inveſtigate their cauſes, however minute; and to report the motive of the actors, however baſe or mean. In a poetical repreſentation of ſuch events, no ſuch confuſion is permitted to appear. A repreſentation deſtined by its nature to affect, muſt not only be founded upon ſome great or intereſting ſubject, but in the management of this ſubject, ſuch means only muſt be employed as are fitted to preſerve, and to promote the intereſt and the ſympathy

ſympathy of the reader. The Hiſtorian who ſhould relate the voyage of Æneas, and the foundation of Rome, muſt of neceſſity relate many trifling and unintereſting events, which could be valuable only from their being true. The Poet who ſhould attempt this ſubject, muſt introduce only pathetic or ſublime events,—muſt unfold their connection with greater clearneſs,—muſt point out their conſequences as of greater moment,—and muſt ſpread over all that tone and character of dignity which we both expect and demand in a compoſition, deſtined to excite the ſenſibility, and to awaken the admiration of mankind. Even that ſpecies of poem which has been called by the Critics the Hiſtorical Epic, and which is only a poetical narration of real events, is yet in ſome meaſure ſubjected to the ſame rule; and though we do not expect from it, the ſublime machinery or the artful conduct of the real Epic, we yet demand a more uniform tone of elevation, and a purer and more dignified ſelection of incidents, than from the ſtrict narrative of real hiſtory. In both the Poet aſſumes the character of a perſon deeply impreſſed with the magnitude of the intereſt of the ſtory he relates. To impreſs his reader with ſimilar ſentiments, is the end and object of his work; and he can no otherwiſe do this, than by preſenting to his mind only ſuch incidents as accord with theſe great emotions, by leaving out whatever in the real hiſtory of the event may be mean or unintereſting, and by the invention of every circumſtance that, while it is inconſiſtent with probability, may raiſe the ſubject of his work, into greater importance

portance in his eſteem. That it is by this rule accordingly the conduct of the Epic Poem is determined, is too obvious to require any illuſtration.

The ſame Unity of emotion is demanded in Dramatic Poetry, at leaſt in the higheſt and nobleſt ſpecies of it, Tragedy; and in the conduct of the Drama, this unity of character is fully as eſſential as any of thoſe three unities, of which every book of Criticiſm is ſo full. If it is painful to us, when we are deeply engaged in ſome great intereſt, to turn our minds to the conſideration of ſome other event, it is fully as painful to us, in the midſt of our admiration or our ſympathy, and while our hearts are ſwelling with tender or with elevated emotions, to deſcend to the conſideration of minute, or mean, or unimportant incidents, however naturally they may be connected with the ſtory, or however much we may be convinced, that they actually took place. The envy which Elizabeth entertained of the beauty of Mary of Scotland, was certainly one cauſe, and probably a great cauſe of the diſtreſſes of that moſt unfortunate Queen; but if a Poet, in a tragedy founded upon her pathetic ſtory, ſhould introduce the ſcene which Melville deſcribes in his Memoirs, and in which the weakneſs of Elizabeth is ſo apparent, we ſhould conſider it both as degrading to the dignity of Tragedy, and unſuited to the nature of the emotion which the ſtory is fitted to raiſe. It is hence that Tragicomedy, is utterly indefenſible, after all that has been ſaid in its defence. If it is painful to us in ſuch

ſuch caſes to deſcend to the conſideration of indifferent incidents, it is a thouſand times more painful to be forced to attend to thoſe that are ludicrous; and there is no man of the moſt common ſenſibility, who does not feel his mind revolt and his indignation kindle at the abſurdity of the Poet, who can thus break in upon the ſacred retirement of his ſorrow, with the intolerable noiſe of vulgar mirth. Had the taſte of SHAKESPEARE been equal to his genius, or had his knowledge of the laws of the Drama correſponded to his knowledge of the human heart, the effect of his compoſitions would not only have been greater than it now is, but greater perhaps than we can well imagine; and had he attempted to produce through a whole compoſition, that powerful and uniform intereſt which he can raiſe in a ſingle ſcene, nothing of that perfection would have been wanting, of which we may conceive this ſublime art to be capable.

Of the neceſſity of this Unity of Emotion, CORNEILLE is the firſt Tragedian of modern Europe who ſeems to have been ſenſible; and I know not whether the faults of this Poet have not been exaggerated by Engliſh Critics, from their inattention to the end which he ſeems to have preſcribed to himſelf in his works. To preſent a faithful picture of human life, or of human paſſions, ſeems not to have been his conception of the intention of Tragedy. His object, on the contrary, ſeems to have been, to exalt and to elevate the imagination; to awaken only the greateſt and nobleſt paſſions of the human mind; and by preſenting ſuch ſcenes and

ſuch

ſuch events alone, as could moſt powerfully promote this end, to render the Theatre a ſchool of ſublime inſtruction, rather than an imitation of common life. To effect this purpoſe, he was early led to ſee the neceſſity, or diſpoſed by the greatneſs of his own mind to the obſervation, of an uniform character of dignity; to diſregard whatever of common, of trivial, or even of pathetic in the originals from which he copied, might ſerve to interrupt this peculiar flow of Emotion; and inſtead of giving a ſimple copy of Nature, to adorn the events he repreſented, with all that eloquence and poetry could afford. He maintains, accordingly, in all his beſt plays, amid much exaggeration and much of the falſe eloquence of his time, a tone of commanding, and even of faſcinating dignity, which diſpoſes us almoſt to believe, that we are converſing with Beings of an higher order than our own; and which blinds us, at leaſt for a time, to all the faults and all the imperfections of his compoſition. I am far from being diſpoſed to defend his opinions of Tragedy, and ſtill leſs to excuſe his extravagance and bombaſt; but I conceive, that no perſon can feel his beauties, or do juſtice to his merits, who does not regard his tragedies in this view; and I think that ſome allowance ought to be made for the faults of a Poet, who firſt ſhewed to his country the example of regular Tragedy, and whoſe works the great Prince of CONDE called "The Breviary of Kings."

In the former ſection, I have endeavoured to ſhow, that no objects are in themſelves fitted

to produce the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, which are not productive of ſome ſimple emotion. In this, I have attempted to ſhow, that no Compoſition of objects or qualities is in fact productive of ſuch emotions, in which an Unity of Character is not preſerved. The ſlight illuſtrations which I have now offered, are probably ſufficient to point out the truth of the general principle; but the application of it to the different Arts of Taſte, and the explanation of the great rules of Compoſition from this conſtitution of our nature, are objects far beyond the limits of theſe Eſſays. I muſt ſatisfy myſelf, therefore, with obſerving in general, that in all the Fine Arts, that Compoſition is moſt excellent, in which the different parts moſt fully unite in the production of one unmingled Emotion, and that taſte the moſt perfect, where the perception of this relation of objects, in point of Expreſſion, is moſt delicate and preciſe.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

I.

THE illuſtrations in the firſt chapter of this Eſſay are intended to ſhow, that whenever the Emotions of Beauty or Sublimity are felt, that exerciſe of Imagination is produced which conſiſts in the proſecution of a train of thought.

The illuſtration in the ſecond chapter are intended point out the diſtinction between ſuch trains, and our ordinary trains of thought, and to ſhow, that this difference conſiſts, *1ſt*, In the ideas which compoſe them being in all caſes Ideas of Emotion; and, *2dly*, In their poſſeſſing an uniform principle of connection through the whole of the train. The effect, therefore, which is produced upon the mind, by objects of Taſte, may be conſidered as conſiſting in the production of a regular or conſiſtent train of Ideas of Emotion.

II.

The account which I have now given of this effect, may perhaps ſerve to point out an important diſtinction between the Emotions of Taſte, and all our different Emotions of Simple Pleaſure. In the caſe of theſe laſt emotions, no additional train of thought is neceſſary. The pleaſurable feeling follows immediately the preſence of the object or quality, and has no dependence upon

any thing for its perfection, but the ſound ſtate of the ſenſe by which it is received. The Emotions of Joy, Pity, Benevolence, Gratitude, Utility, Propriety, Novelty, *&c.* might undoubtedly be felt, although we had no ſuch power of mind as that by which we follow out a train of ideas, and certainly are felt in a thouſand caſes, when this faculty is unemployed.

In the caſe of the Emotions of Taſte, on the other hand, it ſeems evident, that this exerciſe of mind is neceſſary, and that unleſs this train of thought is produced, theſe emotions are unfelt. Whatever may be the nature of that ſimple emotion which any object is fitted to excite, whether that of Gaiety, Tranquillity, Melancholy, *&c.* if it produce not a train of thought in our minds, we are conſcious only of that ſimple Emotion. Whenever, on the contrary, this train of thought, or this exerciſe of imagination is produced, we are conſcious of an emotion of a higher and more pleaſing kind; and which, though it is impoſſible to deſcribe in language, we yet diſtinguiſh by the name of the Emotion of Taſte. If accordingly the Author of our nature had denied us this faculty of imagination, it ſhould ſeem that theſe emotions could not have been felt, and that all our emotions would have been limited to thoſe of ſimple pleaſure.

The Emotions of Taſte may therefore be conſidered as diſtinguiſhed from the Emotions of Simple Pleaſure, by their being dependent upon the exerciſe of our imagination; and though founded in all caſes upon ſome ſimple Emotion, as yet further

ther requiring the employment of this faculty for their exiſtence.

III.

As in every operation of Taſte there are thus two different faculties employed, *viz.* ſome affection or emotion raiſed, and the imagination excited to a train of thought correſponding to this emotion, the peculiar pleaſure which attends, and which conſtitutes the Emotions of Taſte, may naturally be conſidered as compoſed of the pleaſures which ſeparately attend the exerciſe of theſe faculties, or in other words, as produced by the union of pleaſing emotion, with the pleaſure which by the conſtitution of our nature is annexed to the exerciſe of imagination. That both theſe pleaſures are felt in every operation of Taſte, ſeems to me very agreeable to common experience and obſervation.

1. That in every caſe of the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, that ſimple Emotion of Pleaſure is felt, which ariſes from the peculiar nature of the object perceived, every man, I conceive, may very eaſily ſatisfy himſelf. In any beautiful object, whoſe character is Cheerfulneſs, we are conſcious of a feeling of Cheerfulneſs,—in objects of Melancholy, of a feeling of Sadneſs,—in objects of Utility, of a feeling of Satisfaction and Complacence, ſimilar to what we feel from objects of the ſame kind when the Emotion of Beauty is not excited. In ſublime objects, in the ſame manner, whatever their character may be, whether that of Greatneſs, Terror, Power,

&c.

&c. we are conſcious of the feelings of Admiration, of Awe, of Humility, *&c.* and of the ſame pleaſures from the exerciſe of them, which we feel in thoſe caſes where the Emotion of Sublimity is not produced. In the trains of thought which are excited by objects either of Sublimity or Beauty, every man knows, that the character of thoſe trains is determined by the peculiar nature of the object; and inſtead of the Emotions of Taſte being attended with one uniform ſpecies of pleaſure, every man muſt have felt, that the ſum of his pleaſure is in a great degree compoſed of the peculiar pleaſure which the exerciſe of different affections brings.

2. That there is a pleaſure alſo annexed by the conſtitution of our nature, to the exerciſe of imagination, is a propoſition which ſeems to require very little illuſtration. In common opinion, the employment of imagination is always ſuppoſed to communicate delight; when we yield to its power, we are conſidered as indulging in a ſecret pleaſure, and every ſuperiority in the ſtrength or ſenſibility of this faculty is believed to be attended with a ſimilar increaſe in the happineſs of human life. Nor is this perſuaſion of the connection of pleaſure with the exercife of imagination, confined to thoſe caſes where the mind is employed in contemplating only images of joy: for even in thoſe men whoſe conſtitution diſpoſes them to gloomy or melancholy thought, we have ſtill a belief that there is ſome ſecret and faſcinating charm in the diſpoſition which they indulge, and that in this operation of mind itſelf, they find a pleaſure which more than compenſates for all

the

the pain which the character of their thoughts may bring. There is a ſtate of mind alſo, which every man muſt have felt, when, without any particular object of meditation, the imagination ſeems to retire from the realities of life, and to wander amid a creation of its own; when the moſt varied and diſcordant ſcenes riſe as by enchantment before the mind; and when all the other faculties of our nature ſeem gradually to be obſcured, to give to this creation of Fancy a more radiant glow. With what delight ſuch employments of imagination are attended, the young and the romantic can tell, to whom they are often more dear than all the real enjoyments of life; and who, from the noiſe and tumult of vulgar joy, often haſten to retire to ſolitude and ſilence, where they may yield with ſecurity to theſe illuſions of Imagination, and indulge again their viſionary bliſs.

On a ſubject of this kind, however, when illuſtration is perhaps leſs important than deſcription, I am happy to be able to tranſcribe a paſſage, which will render unneceſſary every illuſtration that I can give it. It is a paſſage from a poſthumous work of M. Rouſſeau, in which he deſcribes his mode of life, during a ſummer which he paſſed in the iſland of St. Pierre, in the middle of the little lake of Bienne.

" Quand le beau tems m'invitoit, j'allois me
" jetter ſeul dans un bateau que je conduiſois au
" milieu du lac, quand l'eau étoit calme, et là,
" m'étendant tout de mon long dans le bateau,
" les yeux tournés vers le ciel, je me laiſſois aller

" et

" et dériver lentement au gré de l'eau, quelque-
" fois pendant pluſieurs heures, plongé dans
" mille rêveries confuſes, mais délicieuſes, et qui
" ſans avoir aucun objet bien déterminé ni con-
" ſtant, ne laiſſoient pas d'etre à mon gré cent
" fois préférables à tout ce que j'avois trouvé de
" plus doux dans ce qu'on appelle les plaiſirs de
" la vie.——

" ——Quand le ſoir approchoit, je deſcendois
" des cimes de l'iſle, et j'allois volontiers m'aſ-
" ſeoir au bord du lac, ſur la grève dans quelque
" aſyle caché ; la le bruit des vagues, et l'agita-
" tion de l'eau fixant mes ſens, et chaſſant de mon
" ame toute autre agitation, la plongeoient dans
" une rêverie délicieuſe, où la nuit me ſurprenoit
" ſouvent ſans que je m'en fuſſe apperçu- Le
" flux et reflux de cette eau, ſon bruit continu,
" mais renflé par intervalles, frappant ſans re-
" lâche mon oreille et mes yeux, ſuppléoient aux
" mouvemens internes que la rêverie éteignoit
" en moi, et ſuffiſoient pour me faire ſentir avec
" plaiſir mon éxiſtence, ſans prendre la peine de
" penſer.——

" ——Tel eſt l'état où je me ſuis trouvé ſou-
" vent à l'iſle de St. Pierre dans mes rêveries ſo-
" litaires, ſoit couché dans mon bateau que je
" laiſſois dériver au grè de l'eau, ſoit aſſis ſur les
" rives du lac agité, ſoit ailleurs au bord d'une
" belle riviere, où d'un ruiſſeau murmurant ſur le
" gravier. Telle eſt la manière dont j'ai paſſé
" mon tems, durant le ſéjour que j'y ai fait.
" Qu'on me diſe à preſent ce qu'il y a là d'aſſez
" attrayant pour exciter dans mon cœur des re-

grèts

" grèts ſi vifs, ſi tendres, et ſi durables, qu'au
" bout de quinze ans il m'eſt impoſſible de ſonger
" à cette habitation cherie ſans m'y ſentir à cha-
" que fois tranſporter encore par les élans du de-
" ſir.——

" ——J'ai penſé quelquefois aſſez profonde-
" ment, mais rarement avec plaiſir, preſque tou-
" jours contre mon grè, et comme par force; la
" rêverie me délaſſe et m'amuſe, la reflexion me
" fatigue et m'attriſte. Quelquefois mes rêveries
" finiſſent par meditation, mais plus ſouvent mes
" meditations finiſſent par la rêverie; et durant
" ces égaremens mon ame erre et plâne dans
" l'univers ſur les aîles de l'imagination, dans
" des éxtaſes qui paſſent toute autre jouiſſance.

" Tant que je goutai celle-la dans toute ſa pu-
" reté, toute autre occupation me fut toujours in-
" ſipide. Mais quand une fois, jette dans la car-
" riere literaire, par des impulſions étrangers, je
" ſentis la fatigue du travail d'eſprit, et l'impor-
" tunité d'une célebrité malheureuſe, je ſentis en
" même tems languir et s'attieder mes douces rê-
" veries, et bientot forcé de m'occuper malgrè
" moi de ma triſte ſituation, je ne pus plus re-
" trouver, que bien rarement, ces cheres éxtaſes,
" qui durant cinquante ans m'avoient tenu lieu
" de fortune et de gloire; et ſans autre dépenſe
" que celle du tems, m'avoient rendu dans l'oiſi-
" vité le plus heureux des mortels.

Les Réveries, Promenade 5. *et* 7.

If it is allowed, then, that there is a pleaſure annexed by the conſtitution of our nature, to the Exerciſe

Exerciſe of Imagination; and if the illuſtrations in the firſt chapter are juſt, which are intended to ſhow, that when this exerciſe of mind is not produced, the Emotions of Taſte are unfelt, and that when it is increaſed, theſe Emotions are increaſed with it we ſeem to poſſeſs a ſufficient evidence to conclude, that this Pleaſure exiſts, and forms a part of that peculiar pleaſure which we receive from objects of Sublimity and Beauty.

The pleaſure, therefore, which accompanies the Emotions of Taſte, may be conſidered not as a ſimple, but as a complex pleaſure; and as ariſing not from any ſeparate and peculiar Senſe, but from the union of the pleaſure of SIMPLE EMOTION, with that which is annexed, by the conſtitution of the human mind, to the Exerciſe of IMAGINATION.

IV.

The diſtinction which thus appears to ſubſiſt between the Emotions of Simple Pleaſure, and that complex pleaſure which accompanies the Emotions of Taſte, ſeems to require a ſimilar diſtinction in philoſophical language. I believe, indeed, that the diſtinction is actually to be found in the common language of converſation; and I apprehend that the term DELIGHT is very generally uſed to expreſs the peculiar pleaſure which attends the Emotions of Taſte, in contradiſtinction to the general term Pleaſure, which is appropriated to Simple Emotion. We are *pleaſed*, we ſay, with the gratification of any appetite or affection,—with food when hungry, and with reſt when

when tired,—with the gratification of Curioſity, of Benevolence, or of Reſentment. But we ſay, we are *delighted* with the proſpect of a beautiful landſcape, with the ſight of a fine ſtatute, with hearing a pathetic piece of muſic, with the peruſal of a celebrated poem. In theſe caſes the term Delight is uſed to denote that pleaſure which ariſes from Sublimity and Beauty, and to diſtinguiſh it from thoſe ſimpler pleaſures which ariſe from objects that are only agreeable. I acknowledge, indeed, that this diſtinction is not very accurately adhered to in common language, becauſe in moſt caſes, either of the terms equally expreſſes our meaning; but I apprehend, that the obſervation of it is ſufficiently general, to ſhew ſome conſciouſneſs in mankind of a difference between theſe pleaſures, and to juſtify ſuch a diſtinction in philoſophical language as may expreſs it.

If it were permitted me therefore, I ſhould wiſh to appropriate the term Delight, to ſignify the peculiar pleaſure which attends the Emotions of TASTE, or which is felt, WHEN THE IMAGINATION IS EMPLOYED IN THE PROSECUTION OF A REGULAR TRAIN OF IDEAS OF EMOTION.

ESSAY II.

OF THE

SUBLIMITY AND BEAUTY

OF THE

MATERIAL WORLD.

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OF THE

MATERIAL WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IF the illuſtrations in the preceding Eſſay are juſt, if that exerciſe of mind which takes place when the Emotions of Beauty or Sublimity are felt conſiſts in the proſecution of a regular train of Ideas of Emotion, and if no other objects are in fact productive of the Emotions of Taſte, but ſuch as are fitted to produce ſome ſimple Emotion, there ariſes a queſtion of ſome difficulty, and of very conſiderable importance, viz. What is the ſource of the SUBLIMITY and BEAUTY of the MATERIAL WORLD?

It

It cannot be doubted, that many objects of the Material World are productive of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty: ſome of the fine arts are altogether employed about material objects; and far the greater part of the inſtances of Beauty or Sublimity which occur in every man's experience, are found in matter, or in ſome of its qualities.

On the other hand, I think it muſt be allowed, that Matter in itſelf is unfitted to produce any kind of emotion. The various qualities of matter are known to us only by means of our external ſenſes; but all that ſuch powers of our nature convey, is Senſation and Perception; and whoever will take the trouble of attending to the effect which ſuch qualities, when ſimple and unaſſociated, produce upon his mind, will be ſatisfied, that in no caſe do they produce Emotion, or the exerciſe of any of his affections. The common language of mankind upon this ſubject, perfectly coincides with this obſervation. Such qualities, when ſimple, are always ſpoken of as producing ſenſation, but in no caſe as producing emotion; and although perhaps the general word Feeling, (as applied both to our external and internal ſenſes), may ſometimes be uſed ambiguouſly, yet if we attend to it, we ſhall find, that with regard to material qualities, it is uniformly uſed to expreſs Senſation, and that if we ſubſtitute Emotion for it, every man will perceive the miſtake. The ſmell of a roſe, the colour of ſcarlet, the taſte of a pine apple, when ſpoken of merely as qualities, and abſtracted from the objects in which

which they are found, are ſaid to produce agreeable Senſations, but not agreeable Emotions. In the ſame manner, the ſmell of aſſafœtida, or the taſte of aloes, when ſpoken of as abſtract qualities, are uniformly ſaid to produce unpleaſing Senſations, but not unpleaſing Emotions. If we could conceive ourſelves poſſeſſed only of thoſe powers which we have by means of our external ſenſes, I apprehend there can be no doubt, that in ſuch a caſe, the qualities of matter would produce only ſenſation and perception; that ſuch ſenſations might be either pleaſing or painful, but that in no caſe could they be attended with any emotion.

But though the qualities of matter are in themſelves incapable of producing emotion, or the exerciſe of any affection, yet it is obvious that they may produce this effect, from their aſſociation with other qualities; and as being either the ſigns or expreſſions of ſuch qualities as are fitted by the conſtitution of our nature to produce Emotion. Thus, in the human body, particular forms or colours are the ſigns of particular paſſions or affections. In works of art, particular forms are the ſigns of Dexterity, of Taſte, of Convenience, of Utility. In the works of nature, particular ſounds and colours, *&c.* are the ſigns of Peace, or Danger, or Plenty, or Deſolation, *&c.* In ſuch caſes, the conſtant connection we diſcover between the ſign and the thing ſignified, between the material quality and the quality productive of Emotion, renders at laſt the one expreſſive to us of the other, and very often diſpoſes us to

attribute to the ſign, that effect which is produced only by the quality ſignified.

That ſuch aſſociations are formed with material qualities, every man has ſufficient evidence in his own experience; and there are many cauſes which may be aſſigned, both of the extent and of the univerſality of ſuch aſſociations. I ſhall remark a few of theſe, without pretending to an accurate enumeration.

1. All thoſe external objects, which, from their nature or conſtitution, are productive to us, either of uſe, of convenience, or of pleaſure, or which in any other way are fitted to produce Emotion, are known and diſtinguiſhed by their qualities of form and colour. Such qualities, therefore, are naturally, and even neceſſarily expreſſive to us of thoſe uſes, or conveniencies, or pleaſures. It is by them that we become acquainted with the ſubjects from which ſuch utilities ariſe: it is by them that we learn to diſtinguiſh ſuch ſubjects from one another; and as they are the permanent ſigns of theſe ſeveral utilities, they affect us with the ſame emotion which the utilities ſignified by them are fitted to produce. The material qualities, for inſtance, which diſtinguiſh a ſhip, a plough, a printing-preſs, or a muſical inſtrument, do not ſolely afford us the perception of certain colours or forms, but along with this perception, bring with it the conception of the different uſes or pleaſures which ſuch compoſitions of material qualities produce, and excite in us the ſame Emotion, with the uſes or pleaſures thus ſignified.

fied. As, in this manner, the utilities or pleaſures of all external objects are expreſſed to us by their material ſigns of Colour and of Form, ſuch ſigns are naturally productive of the Emotions which properly ariſe from the qualities ſignified.

2. The qualities of Deſign, of Wiſdom, of Skill, are uniformly expreſſed to us by certain qualities of Form, and certain compoſitions of Forms, Colours and Sounds. Such qualities, therefore, or compoſitions of qualities, become the ſigns of Deſign, or Wiſdom, or Skill, and like all other ſigns, affect us with the ſame Emotion we receive from the qualities ſignified.

3. All our knowledge of the minds of other men, and of their various qualities, is gained by means of material ſigns. Power, Strength, Wiſdom, Fortitude, Juſtice, Benevolence, Magnanimity, Gentleneſs, Tenderneſs, Love, *&c.* are all known to us by means of the external ſigns of them in the Countenance, Geſture, or Voice. Such material ſigns are therefore very early aſſociated in our minds with the qualities they ſignify; and as they are conſtant and invariable, become ſoon productive to us of the ſame Emotions with the qualities themſelves.

In the ſame manner, the Characters, the Diſpoſitions, the Inſtincts of all the various tribes of animals, are known to us by certain ſigns in their frame, or voice, or geſture. Such ſigns become therefore expreſſive to us of theſe Charac-

ters, or Inſtincts, or Diſpoſitions, and affect us with all the Emotions which ſuch qualities are fitted to produce.

4. Beſides theſe immediate expreſſions of qualities of Mind by material ſigns, there are others which ariſe from Reſemblance, in which the qualities of Matter become ſignificant to us, of ſome affecting or intereſting quality of Mind. We learn from experience, that certain qualities of Mind are ſignified by certain qualities of Body. When we find ſimilar qualities of body in inanimate Matter, we are apt to attribute to them the ſame expreſſion, and to conceive them as ſignifying the ſame qualities in this caſe, as in thoſe caſes where they derive their expreſſion immediately from Mind. Thus, Strength and Delicacy, Boldneſs and Modeſty, Old Age and Youth, *&c.* are all expreſſed by particular material ſigns in the human form, and in many caſes by ſimilar ſigns in the forms of animals. When we find ſimilar appearances in the forms of inanimate Matter, we are diſpoſed to conſider them as expreſſive of the ſame qualities, and to regard them with ſimilar Emotions. The univerſality of ſuch aſſociations is evident from the ſtructure of the rudeſt languages. The ſtrength of the Oak, the delicacy of the Myrtle, the boldneſs of a Rock, the modeſty of the Violet, *&c.* are expreſſions common in all languages, and ſo common, that they are ſcarcely in any, conſidered as figurative; yet every man knows, that Strength and Weakneſs, Boldneſs and Modeſty, are qualities, not of Matter, but of Mind, and that without our knowledge of Mind,

Mind, it is impoſſible that we ſhould ever have had any conception of them. How much the effect of deſcriptions of natural ſcenery ariſes from that perſonification, which is founded upon ſuch aſſociations, I believe there is no man of common taſte who muſt not often have been ſenſible.

5. We are led by the conſtitution of our nature, alſo, to perceive reſemblances between our Senſations and Emotions, and of conſequence between the objects that produce them. Thus, there is ſome analogy between the Senſation of gradual Aſcent, and the Emotion of Ambition, —between the Senſation of gradual Deſcent, and the Emotion of Decay,—between the lively Senſation of Sunſhine, and the cheerful Emotion of Joy,—between the painful Senſation of Darkneſs, and the diſpiriting Emotion of Sorrow. In the ſame manner, there are analogies between Silence and Tranquillity,—between the luſtre of Morning, and the gaiety of Hope,—between ſoftneſs of Colouring, and gentleneſs of Character,—between ſlenderneſs of Form, and delicacy of Mind, *&c.* The objects, therefore, which produce ſuch Senſations, though in themſelves not the immediate ſigns of ſuch intereſting or affecting qualities, yet in conſequence of this Reſemblance, become gradually expreſſive of them, and if not always, yet at thoſe times at leaſt, when we are under the dominion of any Emotion, ſerve to bring to our minds the images of all thoſe affecting or intereſting qualities, which, we have been accuſtomed to ſuppoſe

poſe they reſemble. How extenſive this ſource of Aſſociation is, may eaſily be obſerved, in the extent of ſuch kinds of figurative expreſſion in every language.

6. Beſides theſe, Language itſelf is another very important cauſe of the extent of ſuch Aſſociations. The analogies between the qualities of Matter, and the qualities of Mind, which any individual might diſcover or obſerve, might perhaps be few, and muſt of courſe be limited by his ſituation and circumſtances; but the uſe of Language gives to every individual who employs it, the poſſeſſion of all the analogies which ſo many ages have obſerved, between material Qualities, and Qualities capable of producing Emotion. Of how much conſequence this is, may be diſcovered in the different impreſſions which are made by the ſame objects on the common people whoſe vocabulary is limited by their wants, and on thoſe who have had the advantage of a liberal Education.

7. To all theſe ſources of Aſſociation is to be added, that which is peculiar to every individual. There is no man almoſt, who has not, from accident, from the events of his life, or from the nature of his ſtudies, connected agreeable or intereſting Recollections, with particular Colours, or Sounds, or Forms, and to whom ſuch ſounds or colours, *&c.* are not pleaſing from ſuch an Aſſociation. They affect us, in ſome meaſure, as the ſigns

of

of theſe intereſting qualities, and, as in other caſes, produce in us the ſame Emotion with the qualities they ſignify.

Theſe obſervations are probably ſufficient to ſhow the numerous and extenſive aſſociations we have with Matter, and its various qualities, as well as to illuſtrate ſome of the means by which it becomes ſignificant or expreſſive to us of very different, and far more intereſting qualities than thoſe it poſſeſſes in itſelf. By means of the Connection, or Reſemblance, which ſubſiſts between the qualities of Matter, and qualities capable of producing Emotion, the perception of the one immediately, and very often irreſiſtibly ſuggeſts the idea of the other; and ſo early are theſe Aſſociations formed, that it requires afterwards ſome pains to ſeparate this connection, and to prevent us from attributing to the Sign, that effect which is produced alone by the Quality ſignified.

Whatever may be the truth of theſe obſervations, it cannot at leaſt be doubted, that the qualities of Matter are often aſſociated with others, and that they effect us in ſuch caſes, like all other ſigns, by leading our imaginations to the qualities they ſignify. It ſeems to be equally obvious, that in all caſes where Matter, or any of its qualities, produces the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, this effect muſt ariſe either from theſe Material Qualities themſelves, from their being fitted by the conſtitution

ſtitution of our nature, to produce ſuch Emotions; or from ſome other qualities with which they are aſſociated, and of which they operate, as the Signs or Expreſſions.

It ſhould ſeem, therefore, that a very ſimple and a very obvious principle is ſufficient to guide our inveſtigation into the ſource of the ſublimity and beauty of the qualities of Matter. If theſe qualities are in themſelves fitted to produce the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, (or in other words, are in themſelves beautiful or ſublime), I think it is obvious that they muſt produce theſe Emotions, independently of any aſſociation. If, on the contrary, it is found, that theſe qualities only produce ſuch Emotions when they are aſſociated with intereſting or affecting qualities, and that when ſuch Aſſociations are deſtroyed, they no longer produce the ſame Emotions, I think it muſt alſo be allowed, that their Beauty or Sublimity is to be aſcribed, not to the material, but to the aſſociated qualities.

That this is in reality the caſe, I ſhall endeavour to ſhow by a great variety of illuſtrations. It is neceſſary, however, for me to premiſe, that I am very far from conſidering the Inquiries which follow, as a complete examination of the ſubject. They are indeed only detached obſervations on the Sublimity and

and Beauty of ſome of the moſt important claſſes of material qualities, but which, however imperfect they may ſeverally be, yet ſeem to poſſeſs conſiderable weight from their collected evidence.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

Of the SUBLIMITY and BEAUTY of SOUND.

THE Senſes by which we chiefly diſcover BEAUTY or Sublimity in material objects, are thoſe of HEARING and SEEING.

The objects of the firſt, are SOUNDS, whether SIMPLE or COMPOSED.

The objects of the ſecond, are COLOURS, FORMS, and MOTION.

SEC-

SECTION I.

Of SIMPLE SOUNDS.

I SHALL begin with conſidering ſome of thoſe inſtances, where Simple Sounds are productive of the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty. Such ſounds are capable of many diviſions. It may be ſufficient at preſent, to conſider them in the following order:

1. Sounds that occur in inanimate Nature
2. The Notes of Animals. And,
3. The Tones of the Human Voice.

PART II.

Of MISCELLANEOUS SOUNDS.

Of the firſt claſs, or of thoſe Miſcellaneous Sounds that occur in inanimate Nature, there are many which produce Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty.

I.

1. All ſounds in general are SUBLIME, which are aſſociated with the Ideas of Danger; the howling of a Storm,—the murmuring of an Earthquake,—the Report of Artillery,—the Exploſion of Thunder, *&c.*

2. All ſounds are in general Sublime, which are aſſociated with Ideas of great Power or Might; the Noiſe of a Torrent,—the fall of a Cataract,—the uproar of a Tempeſt,—The exploſion of Gun-powder,—the daſhing of the Waves, *&c.*

3. All ſounds, in the ſame manner, are Sublime, which are aſſociated with Ideas of Majeſty or Solemnity, or deep Melancholy, or any other ſtrong Emotion; the Sound of the Trumpet, and all other warlike Inſtruments,—the Note of the Organ,—the Sound of the Curfew,—the tolling of the paſſing Bell, *&c.*

That the Sublimity of ſuch Sounds ariſes from the Ideas of Danger or Power, or Majeſty, *&c.* which are aſſociated with them, and not from the Sounds themſelves, or from any original fitneſs in ſuch ſounds, to produce this Emotion, ſeems to be obvious from the following conſiderations:

1. Such ſounds, inſtead of having any permanent or definite Character of Sublimity, vary in their

their effect, with the qualities they happen to expreſs, and aſſume different characters, according to the nature of theſe qualities.

If ſounds in themſelves were Sublime, it might reaſonably be expected in this, as in every other caſe of Senſe, that their difference of effect would be ſtrictly proportioned to their difference of character, and that Sounds of the ſame kind or character would invariably produce the ſame Emotion. The following inſtances, however, ſeem to ſhow, that no ſpecific character of Sublimity belongs to mere Sound, and that the ſame Sounds may produce very different kinds of Emotion, according to the qualities with which we aſſociate them.

The ſound of Thunder is perhaps of all others in Nature the moſt Sublime. In the generality of mankind this Sublimity is founded on Awe, and ſome degree of Terror; yet how different is the Emotion which it gives to the peaſant who ſees at laſt, after a long drought, the conſent of Heaven to his prayers for rain,—to the philoſopher, who from the height of the Alps, hears it roll beneath his feet,—to the ſoldier, who, under the impreſſion of ancient ſuperſtition, welcomes it, upon the moment of engagement, as the omen of victory! In all theſe caſes, the ſound itſelf is the ſame; but how different the nature of the Sublimity it produces! The report of artillery is Sublime, from the images both of Power and of Danger we aſſociate with it. The noiſe of an engagement heard from a diſtance, is dreadfully Sublime. The firing

firing of a Review is ſcarcely more than magnificent. The ſound of a real ſkirmiſh between a few hundred men, would be more ſublime than all the noiſe of a feigned engagement between a hundred thouſand men. The ſtraggling fire of a company of ſoldiers upon a field-day, is contemptible, and always excites laughter. The ſtraggling fire of the ſame number of men, in a riot, would be extremely ſublime, and perhaps more terrible than an uniform report.

The howling of a Tempeſt is powerfully Sublime from many aſſociations; yet how different to the inhabitant of the land, and the ſailor, who is far from refuge,—to the inhabitant of the ſheltered plain, and the traveller bewildered in the mountains,—to the poor man who has nothing to loſe, and the wealthy, whoſe fortunes are at the mercy of the ſtorm! In all theſe caſes, the Sound itſelf is the ſame, but the nature of the Sublimity it produces is altogether different, and correſponds not to the effect upon the organ of Hearing, but to the character or ſituations of the men by whom it is heard, and the different qualities of which it is expreſſive to them.

The Sound of a Caſcade is almoſt always Sublime; yet no man ever felt in it the ſame ſpecies of Sublimity, in a fruitful Plain, and in a wild and romantic Country,—in the Pride of Summer, and in the Deſolation of Winter,—in the hours of Gaiety, or Tranquillity, or Elevation,—and in ſeaſons of Melancholy, or Anxiety,

iety, or Deſpair. The Sound of a Trumpet is often Sublime; but how different the Sublimity in the day of Battle,—in the March of an Army in Peace,—or amid the ſplendours of a Proceſſion. There are few ſimple ſounds more ſublime than the report of a Cannon; yet every one muſt have felt the different Emotions of Sublimity with which the ſame ſound affects him, and at the ſame intervals, in moments of public Sorrow, or public Rejoicing.

In theſe and many other inſtances that might be mentioned, the nature of the Emotion we experience, correſponds, not to the nature of the Sound itſelf, but to the nature of the Aſſociation we connect with it; and is in fact altogether the ſame with the Emotion which the ſame quality produces, when unaccompanied with Sound. If Sounds in themſelves were fitted by the conſtitution of our nature to produce theſe Emotions, it would ſeem, that greater uniformity would be found in their effects; that the difference of their effects would be proportioned to the difference of their nature as Sounds; and that the ſame Sounds would permanently produce the ſame Emotion.

2. If any particular ſounds are fitted by our conſtitution to produce the Emotion of Sublimity, it ſeems impoſſible that ſounds of a contrary kind ſhould produce the ſame Emotion. If, on the contrary, the Sublimity of Sounds ariſes from the qualities we aſſociate with them, it may reaſonably be expected, that ſounds of all kinds will produce this Emotion, when they

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are expreſſive of ſuch qualities as are in themſelves Sublime. Many very familiar obſervations ſeem to illuſtrate this point.

The moſt general character, perhaps, of Sublimity in Sounds, is that of Loudneſs, and there are doubtleſs many inſtances where ſuch ſounds are very conſtantly ſublime; yet there are many inſtances alſo, where the contrary quality of ſounds is alſo ſublime; and when this happens, it will univerſally be found, that ſuch ſounds are aſſociated with Ideas of Power or Danger, or ſome other quality capable of exciting ſtrong Emotion. The loud and tumultuous ſound of a Storm is undoubtedly Sublime; but there is a low and feeble Sound which frequently precedes it, more ſublime in reality than all the uproar of the ſtorm itſelf, and which has accordingly been frequently made uſe of by Poets, in heightening their deſcriptions of ſuch ſcenes.

Along the woods, along the mooriſh fens
Sighs the ſad Genius of the coming ſtorm,
And up among the looſe diſjointed cliffs
And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave preſageful ſend a hollow moan
Reſounding long in Fancy's liſtening ear.
Then comes the Father of the Tempeſt forth, *&c.*
Thomſon's Winter.

" Did you never obſerve (ſays Mr. Gray in a " letter to a friend) *while rocking winds are pip-* " *ing loud*, that pauſe, as the guſt is recollect- " ing itſelf, and riſing upon the ear in a ſhrill " and plaintive note, like the ſwell of an Æo-

" lian

" lian harp. I do aſſure you there is nothing " in the world ſo like the voice of a ſpirit." Such a ſound in itſelf is inconſiderable, and reſembles many others which are very far from being ſublime; but as the forerunner of the ſtorm, and the ſign of all the imagery we connect with it, it is ſublime in a very great degree. There is in the ſame manner ſaid to be a low rumbling noiſe preceding an earthquake, in itſelf very inconſiderable, and generally likened to ſome very contemptible ſounds; yet in ſuch a ſituation, and with all the images of danger and horror to which it leads, I queſtion whether there is another ſound ſo dreadfully Sublime. The ſoft and placid tone of the human voice is ſurely not ſublime; yet in the following paſſage, which of the great images that precede it, is ſo powerfully ſo? It is a paſſage from the firſt book of Kings, in which the Deity is deſcribed as appearing to the Prophet Elijah. " And he " ſaid, Go forth, and ſtand upon the mount be- " fore the Lord. And behold, the Lord paſſed " by, and a great and ſtrong wind rent the " mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks " before the Lord; but the Lord was not in " the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; " but the Lord was not in the earthquake: " and after the earthquake a fire; but the " Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire " *a ſtill ſmall voice*. And it was ſo, when Eli- " jah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his " mantle."——

Another great diviſion of Sounds is into Grave and Acute. If either of theſe claſſes of ſound is ſublime in itſelf, it ſhould follow, ac-

cording to the general laws of Senſation, that the other ſhould not be ſo. In fact, however, the Sublime is found in both, and perhaps it may be difficult to ſay to which of them it moſt permanently belongs. Inſtances of this kind are within the reach of every perſon's obſervation.

In the ſame manner, it may be obſerved, that the moſt common, and in general, the moſt inſignificant Sounds become Sublime, whenever they are aſſociated with images belonging to Power, or Danger, or Melancholy, or any other ſtrong Emotion, although in other caſes they affect us with no Emotion whatever. There is ſcarcely in nature a more trifling Sound than the buzz of Flies, yet I believe there is no man of common Taſte, who, in the deep ſilence of a ſummer's noon, has not found ſomething ſtrikingly ſublime in this inconſiderable ſound. The falling of a drop of water, produces in general a very inſignificant and unexpreſſive ſound; yet ſometimes in vaults, and in large Cathedrals, a ſingle drop is heard to fall at intervals, from the roof, than which, I know not if there is a ſingle ſound more ſtrikingly Sublime. One can ſcarcely mention a ſound leſs productive of the Sublime, than the ſound of a Hammer. How powerfully, however, in the following deſcription has Shakeſpeare made this vulgar Sound Sublime!

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From camp to camp, thro' the foul womb of night
The hum of either army, ſtilly ſounds,

That

That the fix'd ſentinels almoſt receive
The ſecret whiſpers of each other's watch.
Fire anſwers fire, and thro' their paly flames
Each battle ſees the other's umber'd face;
Steed anſwers ſteed in high and boaſtful neighs
Piercing the earth's dull ear, and from the tents
The armourers accompliſhing the knights
With buſy hammers, cloſing rivets up
Give dreadful note of preparation.

Henry V. *act* 3. *Chorus.*

The ſound of oars in water is ſurely very far from being Sublime, yet in a Tragedy of Thomſon's, this ſound is made ſtrikingly Sublime, when (in the perſon of a man who had been left by the treachery of his companions upon a deſart iſland), he deſcribes the horrors he felt, when he firſt found his being deſerted? And adds,

I never heard
A ſound ſo diſmal as their parting oars.——

Inſtances of the ſame kind are ſo numerous, that it is unneceſſary to inſiſt upon them. If Sounds are Sublime in themſelves, independently of all Aſſociation, it ſeems difficult to account for contrary ſounds producing the ſame effect, and for the ſame ſounds producing different effects, according to the Aſſociations with which they are connected.

3. When ſuch Aſſociations are diſſolved, the ſounds themſelves ceaſe to be Sublime. There are many caſes, undoubtedly, in which this experiment cannot be made, becauſe in many caſes

the connection between ſuch Sounds, and the qualities they indicate, is conſtant and invariable. The connection between the ſound of Thunder, of a Whirlwind, of a Torrent, of an Earthquake, and the qualities of Power, or Danger, or Awfulneſs, which they ſignify, and which the objects themſelves permanently involve, is eſtabliſhed not by Man, but by Nature. It has no dependence upon his Will, and cannot be affected by any diſcipline of his Imagination. It is no wonder, therefore, while ſuch connections are ſo permanent, that the Sublimity which belongs to the qualities of the objects themſelves, ſhould be attributed to their external ſigns, and that ſuch ſigns ſhould be conſidered in themſelves as fitted to produce this Emotion. The only caſe in which theſe aſſociations are poſitively diſſolved, is when, by ſome error of judgment, we either miſtake ſome different ſound, for the Sound of any of theſe objects, or are impoſed upon by ſome imitation of theſe Sounds. In ſuch caſes, I think it will not be denied, that when we diſcover our miſtake, the Sounds are no longer Sublime.

There is nothing more common than for people who are afraid of Thunder, to miſtake ſome very common and indifferent ſound for it; as the rumbling of a Cart, or the rattling of a Carriage. While their miſtake continues, they feel the Sound as ſublime: the moment they are undeceived, they are the firſt to laugh at their error, and to ridicule the Sound which occaſioned it. Children at firſt are as much alarmed at the thunder of the Stage, as at real Thunder. Whenever

Whenever they find that it is only a deception, they amuſe themſelves with mimicking it. It may be obſerved alſo, that very young children ſhow no ſymptoms of Fear or Admiration at Thunder, unleſs perhaps when it is painfully loud, or when they ſee other people alarmed about them; obviouſly from their not having yet aſſociated with it the Idea of Danger: and perhaps alſo from this cauſe, that our imagination aſſiſts the report, and makes it appear much louder than it really is; a circumſtance which ſeems to be confirmed by the common miſtake we make of very inconſiderable noiſes for it. Miſtakes in the ſame manner are often made in thoſe countries where earthquakes are common, between very inconſiderable ſounds, and that low rumbling ſound which is ſaid to precede ſuch an event. There cannot be a doubt, that the moment the miſtake is diſcovered, the noiſe ceaſes to be ſublime. In all other caſes of the ſame kind, where miſtakes of this nature happen, or where we are deceived by imitation, I believe it is agreeable to every perſon's experience, that while the miſtake continues, the ſounds affect us as ſublime; but that as ſoon as we are undeceived, and that the ſign is found not to be accompanied with the qualities uſually ſignified, it ceaſes immediately to affect us with any Emotion. If any ſounds were in themſelves Sublime, or fitted by the conſtitution of our nature to produce this Emotion, independently of all Aſſociation, it would ſeem that there could be no change of our Emotion, and that theſe ſounds would as permanently produce their correſponden-

reſpondent Emotion, as the objects of every other Senſe produce their correſpondent ideas.

In all caſes, however, where theſe aſſociations are either accidental or temporary, and not as in the former caſe, permanent in their nature, it will be found, that ſounds are ſublime only, when they are expreſſive of qualities capable of producing ſome powerful Emotion, and that in all other caſes the ſame ſounds are ſimply indifferent. In ſome of the inſtances formerly mentioned, where common or vulgar ſounds are rendered ſublime by aſſociation, it is obvious that the ſame ſounds in general, when they have no ſuch expreſſion to us, are very different from Sublimity. The buzz of flies, the dropping of water, the ſound of a hammer, the daſhing of an oar, and many others which might eaſily be mentioned, are in general, Sounds abſolutely indifferent, and ſo far from poſſeſſing any Sublimity in themſelves, that it might be difficult at firſt to perſuade any man that they could be made ſo. Their Sublimity therefore can only be attributed to the qualities which they ſignify.

There are few ſounds, in the ſame manner, much more ſublime, than the ſtriking of a clock at midnight. In other ſituations the very ſame ſound is altogether different in its expreſſion. In the morning it is cheerful—at noon indifferent, or at leaſt unnoticed. In the evening plaintive,—at night only ſublime. In the tolling of a bell, the ſound is uniformly the ſame; yet ſuch a ſound has very different expreſſions, from

from the peculiar purpoſes to which it is applied. The paſſing bell, and the funeral bell, alone are ſublime. The whiſtling of the wind in an autumnal, or in a wintery night, is often felt as ſublime, and has accordingly been frequently introduced into poetical deſcriptions of a ſimilar character. The niceſt ear, however, is unable to diſtinguiſh any difference betwixt this ſound, in the ſeaſons before mentioned, and in ſpring or ſummer, when, if it has any character at all, it has a character very different from Sublimity. The Trumpet is very generally employed in ſcenes of Magnificence or Solemnity. The ſound of the trumpet in ſuch ſituations is accordingly very ſublime, and ſeems to us to be expreſſive of that ſolemnity or magnificence. This inſtrument, however, as every one knows, is very often degraded to very mean offices. In ſuch caſes, the ſound is altogether indifferent, if not contemptible. The Bagpipe has, to a Scotch Highlander, no inconſiderable degree of ſublimity, from its being the martial inſtrument of the country, and of conſequence aſſociated with many ſpirited and many magnificent images. To the reſt of the world, the ſound of this inſtrument is at beſt but barely tolerable. They who are acquainted with the hiſtory of ſuperſtition, will recollect many inſtances where Sounds have become ſublime from this Aſſociation, which to the reſt of mankind were very inſignificant, and which have become alſo inſignificant both to Individuals and to Nations, when the ſuperſtitions upon which their expreſſion was founded, had ceaſed.

There

There are ſeveral other conſiderations, from which the principle I here endeavour to illuſtrate might be confirmed,—the uniform connection between Sublime Sounds, and ſome quality capable of producing Emotion, and the impoſſibility of finding an inſtance where Sound is Sublime, independently of all Aſſociation,—the great difference in the number of ſounds that are ſublime to the common people, and men of cultivated or poetical imagination,—and the difference which every man feels in the effect of ſuch ſounds in producing this Emotion, according to the particular ſtate of his own mind, or according to the particular ſtrength or weakneſs of his ſenſibility to the qualities which ſuch ſounds expreſs. But I am unwilling to anticipate the reader in ſpeculations which he can ſo eaſily proſecute for himſelf. If the illuſtrations I have already offered are juſt; if Sounds of all kinds are ſublime, when they are expreſſive of any qualities capable of producing ſtrong Emotions; and if no Sounds continue to be ſublime, when they ceaſe to be expreſſive of ſuch qualities, it is, I think, reaſonable to conclude, that the Sublimity of ſuch Sounds is to be aſcribed, not to the mere quality of Sound, but to thoſe aſſociated qualities of which it is ſignificant.

II.

There is a great variety of ſounds alſo, that occur in the ſcenes of Nature, which are productive of the Emotion of Beauty; the ſound of a Water-

a Waterfall, the murmuring of a Rivulet, the whiſpering of the Wind, the Sheepfold Bell, the ſound of the Curfew, *&c.*

That ſuch ſounds are aſſociated in our minds, with various qualities capable of producing Emotion, I think every man may be ſatisfied from his own experience. When ſuch ſounds occur, they are expreſſive to us of ſome particular character: they ſuit one ſpecies of Emotion, and not others; and if this were not obvious in itſelf, it might be made ſufficiently obvious, from the uſe of ſuch ſounds in poetical Compoſition. Every man, there, judges of the propriety of their introduction, and determines with regard to the taſte and judgment of the Poet, by their ſuitableneſs to the nature of the Emotion he has it in his view to excite. Every man, therefore, has ſome peculiar Emotion aſſociated with ſuch ſounds, or ſome quality, of which they are conſidered as the ſigns or expreſſions.

That the Beauty of ſuch ſounds ariſes from the qualities of which they are expreſſive, and not from any original fitneſs in them to produce this Emotion, may perhaps be evident from the following conſiderations;

1. To thoſe who have no ſuch aſſociations, or who conſider them ſimply as Sounds, they have no beauty. It is long before children ſhow any degree of ſenſibility to the beauty of ſuch ſounds. To the greater number of them, in the ſame manner, the common people are altogether indifferent. To the peaſant, the Curfew is only the

the mark of the hour of the evening,—the Sheep-bell, the ſign of the neighbourhood of the flock,—the ſound of a Caſcade, the ſign of the falling of water, *&c.* Give them the aſſociations which men of cultivated imagination have with ſuch ſounds, and they will infallibly feel their beauty.

In the ſame manner, men of the beſt natural taſte, who have not formed ſuch aſſociations, are equally inſenſible to the beauty of ſuch Sounds. The inhabitant of a country where there are no waterfalls, is ſtunned at firſt with the noiſe of a caſcade, but is not delighted with it. They who are not accuſtomed to the Curfew, and who are ignorant of its being the evening bell, and as ſuch, aſſociated with all thoſe images of tranquillity and peace, which render that ſeaſon of the day ſo charming, feel nothing more from its ſound, than from the ſound of a bell at any other hour of the day. The ſound of the Sheepfold bell is but an inſignificant noiſe to thoſe who have never lived in a paſtoral country, and who do not conſider it as expreſſive of thoſe images of ſimple and romantic pleaſure, which are ſo naturally connected with ſuch ſcenes. Every man acquainted with the poetry of diſtant nations, knows, in the ſame manner, how much the beauty of many alluſions to peculiar ſounds of theſe countries is loſt to thoſe, who are ſtrangers to them, and who, of conſequence, have none of thoſe aſſociations which render them ſo expreſſive to the natives.

2. It is further obſervable, that ſuch Sounds are beautiful only in particular tempers of mind, or

or when we are under the influence of ſuch Emotions as accord with the expreſſions which they poſſeſs. If, on the contrary, ſuch ſounds were beautiful in themſelves, although in different ſtates of mind, we might afford them different degrees of attention; yet in all ſituations they would be beautiful, in the ſame manner as in every ſtate of mind the objects of all other ſenſes uniformly produce their correſpondent ideas. The ſound of the Curfew, for inſtance, ſo beautiful in moments of melancholy, or tranquillity, in a joyful or even in a cheerful hour, would be directly the reverſe. The ſound of a Waterfall, ſo valued amid the luxuriant ſcenery of ſummer, is ſcarcely obſerved, or if obſerved, ſimply diſagreeable amid the rigours of winter. The ſound of the hunting Horn, ſo extremely picturesque in ſeaſons of gaiety, would be inſupportable in hours of melancholy.

It is at particular ſeaſons only, in truth, that we are ſenſible to the beauty of any of the Sounds before mentioned. For once that they affect us, they occur to us ten times without effect. The real and the moſt important buſineſs of life could not be carried on, if we were to indulge at all times our Senſibility either to Sublimity or Beauty. It is only at thoſe ſeaſons, that ſuch ſounds affect us with any Emotions of Beauty, when we happen to be in that temper of mind, which ſuits with the qualities of which they are expreſſive. In our common hours, when we are either thoughtleſs or buſy, we ſuffer them to paſs without notice. If ſuch ſounds were beautiful in themſelves,

themſelves, ſuch variations in their effects could not poſſibly happen.

3. When ſuch aſſociations are diſſolved, the ſounds themſelves ceaſe to be beautiful. If a man of the moſt common taſte were carried into any ſtriking ſcene of an ornamented garden, and placed within the hearing of a Caſcade, and were told, in the midſt of his enthuſiaſm, that what he takes for a Caſcade is only a Deception, the ſound continues the ſame, but the beauty of it would be irrecoverably gone. The tinkling of the Sheepfold bell may be imitated by many very common ſounds; but who is there who could for a moment liſten to any imitation of this romantic Sound? There are a great number of ſounds which exactly reſemble the ſound of the hunting Horn, and which are frequently heard alſo in the ſame ſcenes: when known, however, ſome of them are ridiculous, none beautiful. The ſame bell which is ſo ſtrikingly beautiful in the evening, is altogether unnoticed at noon. "The "flute of a Shepherd (ſays Dr. Beattie, with his "uſual beauty of expreſſion) heard at a diſtance "in a fine ſummer's day, amidſt a romantic ſcene "of groves, hills, and waters, will give rapture "to the ear of the wanderer; though the tune, "the inſtrument, and the muſician be ſuch as he "could not endure in any other place." Inſtances of a ſimilar kind are ſo numerous, that I forbear to detail them. Upon the ſuppoſition of any original and independent beauty in Sounds, ſuch variations are altogether unaccountable.

I ſhall

I ſhall only farther obſerve upon this ſubject, that when it is conſidered, how few Sounds are beautiful amid the infinite number which occur in the ſcenes of Nature, and that wherever they do occur, there is always ſome pleaſing or intereſting quality of which they are expreſſive, there ariſes a very ſtrong preſumption, independently of all other conſiderations, that the Beauty of ſuch particular Sounds is derived from the qualities which they expreſs, and not the effect of the mere ſounds themſelves.

PART II.

Of the NOTES *of* ANIMALS.

There are inſtances, I believe, both of Sublimity and Beauty, in the Notes of Animals. That ſuch Sounds are aſſociated with the qualities of the Animals to which they belong, and become expreſſive of theſe qualities, cannot, I think, be denied. There are beſides other aſſociations we have with them, from their Manner of Life, the Scenes which they uſually inhabit, and the Countries from which they come.

I.

That the Notes or Cries of ſome animals are SUBLIME, every one knows: the Roar of the Lion,

Lion, the Growling of Bears, the Howling of Wolves, the Scream of the Eagle, *&c.* In all thoſe caſes, theſe are the notes of animals remarkable for their ſtrength, and formidable from their ferocity. It would ſeem very natural, therefore, that the Sublimity of ſuch Sounds ſhould ariſe from the qualities of which they are expreſſive; and which are of a nature fitted to excite very powerful Emotions in our minds.

That this is in reality the caſe, and that it is not the Sounds themſelves which have this effect, appears to be obvious from the two following conſiderations:

1. When we have no aſſociations of this kind, ſuch Sounds are productive of no ſuch Emotion. There is not one of theſe Sounds which may not be imitated in ſome manner or other; and which, while we are ignorant of the deception, does not produce the ſame Emotion with the real Sounds: when we are undeceived, however, we are conſcious of no other Emotion, but that perhaps of ſimple pain from its loudneſs. The howl of the Wolf is little diſtinguiſhed from the howl of the Dog, either in its tone or in its ſtrength, but there is no compariſon between their Sublimity. There are few, if any of theſe Sounds ſo loud as the moſt common of all Sounds, the lowing of a Cow; yet this is the very reverſe of Sublimity. Imagine this Sound, on the contrary, expreſſive of Fierceneſs or Strength, and there can be no doubt that it would become Sublime. The hooting of the Owl at midnight, or amid ruins, is ſtrikingly Sublime. The ſame ſound at noon, or during

during the day, is very far from being ſo. The ſcream of the Eagle is ſimply diſagreeable, when the bird is either tamed or confined: it is Sublime only, when it is heard amid Rocks and Deſarts, and when it is expreſſive to us of Liberty, and Independence, and ſavage Majeſty. The neighing of a War-horſe in the field of battle, or of a young and untamed Horſe when at large among mountains, is powerfully Sublime. The ſame ſound in a Cart-horſe, or a Horſe in the ſtable, is ſimply indifferent, if not diſagreeable. No Sound is more abſolutely mean, than the grunting of Swine. The ſame Sound in the wild Boar, an animal remarkable both for fierceneſs and ſtrength, is Sublime. The memory of the reader will ſupply many other inſtances.

2. The Sublimity of ſuch ſounds correſponds not to their Nature, as Sounds, but to the Nature of the Qualities they ſignify. Sounds of all kinds are Sublime, in proportion as they are expreſſive of Power, or Fierceneſs, or Strength, or any other quality capable of producing ſtrong Emotions in the animals which they diſtinguiſh. There are many inſtances undoubtedly where loud Cries are Sublime, but there are many alſo, where ſuch Notes are very far from being ſo. The lowing of Cows, the braying of the Aſs, the ſcream of the Peacock, and many other inoffenſive birds, are only mean or diſagreeable.

Low or feeble Sounds, in the ſame manner, are generally conſidered as the contrary of Sublime; yet there are alſo many inſtances where ſuch Sounds are ſtrongly Sublime, when they

diſtinguiſh

diſtinguiſh the notes of fierce, or dangerous, or powerful animals. There is not a Sound ſo generally contemptible as that which we diſtinguiſhed by the name of Hiſſing, yet this is the Sound appropriated to Serpents, and the greater part of poiſonous reptiles; and, as ſuch, is extremely Sublime. The noiſe of the Rattleſnake (that moſt dangerous animal of all his tribe) is very little different from the noiſe of a child's plaything, yet who will deny its Sublimity! The growl of the Tyger reſembles the purring of a Cat: the one is Sublime, the other inſignificant. Nothing can be more trifling than the Sound produced by that little animal, which among the common people is called the Death-watch; yet many a bold heart hath felt its power. The inhabitants of modern Europe would ſmile, if they were aſked, if there were any Sublimity in the Notes of Chickens, or Swallows, or Magpies; yet under the influence of ancient ſuperſtition, when ſuch animals were conſidered as ominous, the braveſt among the people have trembled at their Sound. The ſuperſtitions of other countries afford innumerable inſtances of the ſame kind.

If theſe illuſtrations are juſt, it ſhould ſeem, that the Sublimity of the Notes of Animals is to be aſcribed to the Aſſociations we connect with them, and not to any original fitneſs in the mere Sounds themſelves, to produce this Emotion.

II.

That the BEAUTY of the Notes or Cries of Animals ariſes from the ſame cauſe, or from the qualities

ties of which they are expreſſive to us, may perhaps be obvious from conſiderations equally familiar.

It ſeems at leaſt very difficult to account for the inſtances of ſuch Sounds which are univerſally reckoned beautiful, if we conſider the Sounds themſelves as the cauſes of this Emotion. The number of notes is as various as the different ſpecies of animals, and amid theſe there are a thouſand inſtances, where ſimilar-Sounds are by no means productive of ſimilar effects; and where, although the difference to the Ear is extremely ſmall, there is yet a great difference in their capacity of producing ſuch Emotions. If, on the contrary, we conſider the ſource of their beauty, as conſiſting in the pleaſing or affecting qualities with which ſuch ſounds are aſſociated, we have an eaſy ſolution of the difficulty, and which will be found at the ſame time perfectly to agree with the facts.

It would lead to a very long, and very unneceſſary enquiry, if I were to attempt to enumerate the various Notes of this kind that are beautiful, and the different aſſociations we have with them. That with many ſuch ſounds we have in fact ſuch aſſociations, is a matter, I apprehend, ſo conformable to every man's experience, that it would be ſuperfluous to attempt to prove it.

There is indeed one claſs of animals, of which the notes are in a ſingular degree objects of Beauty: I mean Birds; and for this we may aſſign very ſufficient reaſons. *1ſt*, Such notes approach

much nearer than any other, to the tones of the human voice, and are therefore much more ſtrongly expreſſive to us of ſuch qualities as we are affected by. *2dly*, Theſe animals are much more than any other the objects of our intereſt and regard; not only from our greater acquaintance with them, and from the minuteneſs and delicacy of their forms, which renders them in ſome meaſure the objects of Tenderneſs; but chiefly from their modes of life, and from the little domeſtic arrangements and attachments which we obſerve among them ſo much more ſtrongly than among any other animals, and which indicate more affecting and endearing qualities in the animals themſelves, than in any others we know. That we have ſuch aſſociations with Birds, is very obvious, from the uſe which is made of their inſtincts and manner of life, in the poetical compoſitions of all nations.

That it is from ſuch aſſociations the beauty of the notes of animals ariſes, may appear from the following conſiderations:

1. They who have no ſuch Aſſociations, feel no Emotion of Beauty from them. A peaſant would laugh, if he were aſked, if the call of a Goat, or the bleat of a Sheep, or the lowing of a Cow were beautiful; yet in certain ſituations, all of theſe are undoubtedly ſo. A child ſhows no ſymptom of admiration at thoſe Sounds which are moſt affecting in natural ſcenery, to other people. Every one will recollect, in what total indifference his early years were paſſed, to that multitude of beautiful Sounds which occur in the

the country; and I believe, if we attend to it ſufficiently, it will be found, that the period when we became ſenſible to their beauty, was when we firſt began to feel them as expreſſive, either from our own obſervation of Nature, or from the peruſal of books of poetry. In the ſame manner, they who travel into very diſtant countries, are at firſt inſenſible to the beauty which the natives of theſe countries aſcribe to the notes of the animals belonging to them, obviouſly from their not having yet acquired the aſſociations which is the foundation of their beauty. The notes which are ſacred from any kind of ſuperſtition, are beautiful only to thoſe who are under the dominion of that ſuperſtition. A foreigner does not diſtinguiſh any beauty in the note of the Stork. To the Hollander, however, to whom that bird is the object of a very popular and very pleaſing ſuperſtition, this note is ſingularly beautiful.

2. Such Sounds as are either from experience, or from imagination, aſſociated with certain qualities capable of producing Emotion, are beautiful only when they are perceived in thoſe tempers of mind which are favourable to theſe Emotions. Inſtances of this are very numerous. The bleating of a Lamb is beautiful in a fine day in ſpring: in the depth of winter it is very far from being ſo. The lowing of a Cow at a diſtance, amid the ſcenery of a paſtoral landſcape in ſummer, is extremely beautiful: in a farm-yard it is abſolutely diſagreeable. The hum of the Beetle is beautiful in a fine ſummer evening, as appearing to ſuit the ſtillneſs and repoſe of that pleaſing ſeaſon: in the noon of day it is perfectly indifferent.

The twitter of the Swallow is beautiful in the morning, and ſeems to be expreſſive of the cheerfulneſs of that time: at any other hour it is quite inſignificant. Even the ſong of the Nightingale, ſo wonderfully charming in the twilight, or at night, is altogether diſregarded during the day; in ſo much ſo, that it has given riſe to the common miſtake, that this bird does not ſing but at night. If ſuch notes were beautiful in themſelves, independently of all aſſociation, they would, neceſſarily, at all times be beautiful.

3. In this, as in other caſes before mentioned, when ſuch aſſociations are deſtroyed, the Beauty of the Sounds ceaſes to be felt. The call of a Goat, for inſtance, among rocks, is ſtrikingly beautiful, as expreſſing wildneſs and independence. In a farm-yard, or in a common incloſure, it is very far from being ſo. The plaintive and intereſting bleat of the Lamb ceaſes to be beautiful whenever it ceaſes to be the ſign of infancy, and the call for that tenderneſs which the infancy of all animals ſo naturally demands. There is a bird that imitates the notes of all other birds with great accuracy. Such imitations, however, are not in the leaſt beautiful in it. There are people, in the ſame manner, who imitate the ſong of birds with ſurpriſing dexterity. It is the imitation, however, in ſuch a caſe, that alone pleaſes us, and not the notes themſelves. It is poſſible (according to the curious experiments of Mr. Barrington) to teach a bird of any ſpecies the notes of any other ſpecies. It may, however, I think very juſtly be doubted, whether the acquired notes would be equally beautiful. The connection we obſerve

obſerve between particular birds, and the peculiar ſcenes in Nature which they inhabit, and the different ſeaſons at which they appear; and the great difference in their inſtincts and manner of life, render their notes expreſſive to us of very diſſimilar characters; and we accordingly diſtinguiſh them by epithets expreſſive of this variety. The wildneſs of the Linnet, the tenderneſs of the Redbreaſt, the pertneſs of the Sparrow, the cheerfulneſs of the Lark, the ſoftneſs of the Bulfinch, the plaintiveneſs of the Nightingale, the melancholy of the Owl, are expreſſions in general uſe, and the Aſſociations we thus connect with them, very obviouſly determine the character or expreſſion of their Notes. By the artificial education above mentioned, all theſe Aſſociations would be deſtroyed; and as far as I am able to judge, all, or at leaſt a great part of the Beauty we feel from their ſongs. It is in the ſame manner, that we are generally unhappy, inſtead of being delighted with the ſong of a bird in the cage. It is ſomewhat like the ſmile of Grief, which is much more dreadful than tears, or like the playfulneſs of an infant, amid ſcenes of Sorrow. It is difficult therefore to ſay, whether in this cruel practice there is a greater want of Taſte or of Humanity; and there could be in fact no excuſe for it, if there were not a kind of tenderneſs excited towards them, from the reflection that they are altogether dependent upon our benevolence, and a very natural gratitude awakened by the exertions they make for our pleaſure.

I for-

I forbear to produce any farther illuſtrations on this ſubject. From thoſe that have been produced, it ſeems to me that we have ſufficient ground for concluding, that, of thoſe Sounds which have been conſidered, the Sounds that occur in the ſcenes of Nature, and the Sounds produced by animals, the Sublimity or Beauty ariſes from the qualities of which they are conſidered as the Signs of Expreſſions, and not from any original fitneſs in the Sounds themſelves to produce ſuch Emotions.

I have only further to add, that upon the principle of the abſolute and independent Sublimity or Beauty of Sounds, it is very difficult to account for the different Sounds which have been mentioned as productive of theſe Emotions. There is certainly no reſemblance as ſounds, between the noiſe of Thunder, and the hiſſing of a Serpent,—between the growling of a Tyger, and the exploſion of Gunpowder,—between the ſcream of an Eagle, and the ſhouting of a multitude; yet all of theſe are Sublime. In the ſame manner, there is as little reſemblance, between the tinkling of the Sheepfold bell, and the murmuring of the Breeze,—between the hum of the Beetle, and the ſong of the Lark,—between the twitter of the Swallow, and the ſound of the Curfew; yet all of theſe are beautiful. Upon the principle which I endeavour to illuſtrate, they are perfectly accountable.

PART

PART III.

Of the TONES *of the* HUMAN VOICE.

There is a ſimilar Sublimity or Beauty felt in particular Notes or Tones of the human Voice.

That ſuch Sounds are aſſociated in our Imaginations, with the qualities of mind of which they are in general expreſſive, and that they naturally produce in us the conception of theſe qualities, is a fact ſo obvious, that there is no man who muſt not have obſerved it. There are ſome Philoſophers who conſider theſe as the natural ſigns of Paſſion or Affection, and who believe that it is not from Experience, but by means of an original faculty, that we interpret them; and this opinion is ſupported by great authorities. Whether this is ſo, or not, in the preſent enquiry, is of no very great importance; ſince, although it ſhould be denied that we underſtand ſuch ſigns inſtinctively, it cannot be denied, that very early in infancy this Aſſociation is formed, and that our opinions and conduct are regulated by it.

That the Beauty or Sublimity of ſuch Tones, ariſes from the nature of the qualities they expreſs, and not from the nature of the Sounds themſelves, may appear from the following obſervations.

1. Such

1. Such ſounds are beautiful or ſublime, only, as they expreſs Paſſions or Affections which excite our ſympathy. There are a great variety of tones in the human voice, yet all theſe tones are not beautiful. If we enquire what are the particular Tones which are ſo, it will univerſally be found, that they are ſuch as are expreſſive of pleaſing or intereſting affections. The tones peculiar to Anger, Peeviſhneſs, Malice, Envy, Miſanthropy, Deceit, *&c.* are neither agreeable nor beautiful. The Tone of Good Nature, though very agreeable, is not beautiful but at particular ſeaſons, becauſe the quality itſelf is in general rather the ſource of complacence than pleaſure: we regret the want of it, but we do not much enjoy its preſence. On the contrary, the tones peculiar to Hope, Joy, Humility, Gentleneſs, Modeſty, Melancholy, *&c.* though all extremely different, are all beautiful; becauſe the qualities they expreſs are all the objects of Intereſt and Approbation. In the ſame manner, the tones peculiar to Magnanimity, Fortitude Self-denial, Patience, Reſignation, *&c.* are all ſublime; and for a ſimilar reaſon. This coincidence of the Beauty and Sublimity of the Tones of the human Voice, with thoſe qualities of mind that are intereſting or affecting to us, if it is not a formal proof, is yet a ſtrong preſumption that it is from the expreſſion of ſuch qualities that theſe ſounds derive their Sublimity or Beauty.

2. The effect of ſuch ſounds in producing theſe Emotions, inſtead of being permanent, is limited by the particular temper of mind we happen

happen to be in, or by the coincidence between that temper, and the peculiar qualities of which ſuch ſounds are expreſſive. To moſt men, for inſtance, the tone of Hope is beautiful. To a man in Deſpair, I preſume it would be far from being ſo. To a man in Grief, the tone of Cheerfulneſs is ſimply painful. The tone of Indignation, though in particular ſituations ſtrongly ſublime to a man of a quiet and placid temper, is unpleaſant. To men of an ardent and ſanguine character, the tone of Patience is contemptible. To peeviſh and irritable ſpirits, the voice of Humility, ſo peculiarly beautiful, is provoking. Such obſervations may be extended to many diverſities of paſſion: and it may ſtill farther be remarked, that thoſe Sounds in the human Voice, which are moſt beautiful or moſt ſublime to us, are always thoſe that are expreſſive of the qualities of mind, which, from our particular conſtitutions or habits, we are moſt diſpoſed to be affected by. If the Beauty or Sublimity of ſuch tones were independent of the qualities of mind we thus aſſociate with them, ſuch diverſities could not happen, and the ſame Sounds would produce uniformly the ſame Emotions, as the ſame Colours or Smells produce uniformly the ſame Senſations.

3. Similar Tones, in this caſe, do not produce ſimilar Emotions, as ſhould ſeem to happen if theſe effects were produced by the mere Sounds themſelves. There is little affinity, for inſtance, between the low and depreſſed tone of Grief, and the ſhrill and piercing note of Joy; yet both are beautiful. There is little reſemblance

blance between the loud ſound of Rage, and the low placid tone of Patience; yet both are, in many caſes, ſublime. The tone of Peeviſhneſs, is not very different from the tone of Melancholy; yet the one is beautiful, the other poſitively diſagreeable. The tone of Puſillanimity is little diſtinguiſhable from the tone of Patience; but how different in the effects they produce upon our minds! Obſervations of this kind, it is in the power of every one to extend.

4. Whenever theſe Tones are counterfeited, or whenever they ceaſe to be the Signs of thoſe qualities of mind of which we have generally found them ſignificant, they immediately ceaſe either to be ſublime or beautiful. Every one muſt have obſerved, that this is the effect of Mimicry. Wherever, in the ſame manner, any ſpecies of deceit is uſed; or where we know that theſe tones are employed, without the exiſtence of the correſpondent paſſions, we no longer feel them as beautiful or ſublime. If the Sounds themſelves were the cauſes of theſe Emotions, whatever we might think of the perſon, the Sounds themſelves would continue to produce the Emotions either of Sublimity or Beauty, in the ſame manner as the moſt abſurd miſapplication of Colours, never diſturbs our perception of them as colours.

5. There is yet a further conſideration which may perhaps more clearly illuſtrate this opinion, *viz.* That the Beauty or Sublimity of ſuch Sounds in the human Voice, altogether depends on

on our opinion of the propriety or impropriety of the affections which they expreſs. We know either from Nature, or from Experience, that particular Sounds or Tones are the expreſſion of particular Paſſions and Affections; and the perception of ſuch ſounds is immediately accompanied with the conception of ſuch affections in the perſon from whom they proceed. But it is only from actual obſervation or enquiry, that we can know what is the cauſe of theſe affections. Our ſympathy, our intereſt, it is plain, depends on the nature of this connection, on our opinion of the propriety or impropriety of ſuch affections in ſuch circumſtances. All this, however, does not in any degree affect the nature of the Sound, which is ſtill the ſame, whether the affection be proper or improper. It is very obvious, however, that our ſenſe of the Beauty or Sublimity of ſuch Sounds, depends on our opinion of this Propriety. No tone of Paſſion or Affection is beautiful, with which we do not ſympathiſe. The tone of Joy, for inſtance, is beautiful in moſt caſes where it is heard. Suppoſe we find that ſuch a Sound proceeds from ſome very trifling or ridiculous cauſe, our ſenſe of its Beauty is inſtantly deſtroyed with our opinion of its Propriety. The tone of Melancholy, or moderated Grief, is affecting and beautiful beyond moſt others. Aſſign ſome frivolous reaſon for it, and inſtantly it becomes contemptible. The tone of Patience is ſublime in a great degree. Tell us that it is Puſillanimity, and its effect is inſtantly gone. The high imperious note of Rage is often ſublime. A trifling cauſe renders it ſimply painful.

The

The ſame obſervation may be extended to the tones of all our paſſions. It is, I conceive, extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, to account for this change of Emotion, on the principle of the original and independent Beauty of ſuch Sounds.

With regard to the human Voice, however, it is to be obſerved, that beſides all this, there is alſo a Beauty in particular degrees of the ſame Tones. Although the expreſſion of the different paſſions is the ſame in all men, yet it neceſſarily happens, that there is a ſenſible difference in the degree or character of theſe ſimilar Sounds. There is no man of any delicacy of organs, who muſt not often have been ſenſible of ſuch differences. Theſe alſo are expreſſive to us of ſeveral qualities. They are, in the *firſt* place, expreſſive of the perfection or imperfection of the organs of ſpeech, and of the health or indiſpoſition of the perſon; circumſtances which often determines in a great degree, when either of theſe expreſſions are ſtrong, the pleaſure or pain we have in their converſation. *2dly*, They are expreſſive alſo of the temper or character of mind. As we are naturally led to judge of the character of the perſon, from the peculiar tones of his voice, and to believe that ſuch paſſions have the principal dominion of his mind, which have the moſt prevalent expreſſion in his ſpeech, ſo we are led in the ſame way to judge of the degree or force of theſe paſſions, by the degree or ſtrength of ſuch tones in his voice. This kind of inference is ſo natural, that there is perhaps no perſon who has not made it.

That

That the Beauty of ſuch degrees of Sound ariſes from ſuch aſſociations is apparent, as it is expreſſive to us of moderation and ſelf-command, —as it expreſſes habit, more than immediate impulſe,—as it is peculiar to ſuch tones only as are expreſſive of affecting paſſions or diſpoſitions of mind,—as it is felt alone by thoſe who are affected by ſuch diſpoſitions,—and as it is beautiful only in thoſe caſes where this temperance of Emotion, of which it is the ſign, is conſidered as proper. I forbear therefore any further illuſtration of it.

The obſervations which I have offered on the ſubject of Simple Sounds, are perhaps ſufficient to ſhow, that the Sublimity and Beauty of theſe Sounds ariſes in all caſes, from the qualities with which we have obſerved them connected, and of which they appear to us as the Signs or Expreſſions; and that no Sounds in themſelves are fitted by the conſtitution of our nature to produce theſe Emotions.

It is natural, however, to ſuppoſe, that in this, as in every other caſe, our experience ſhould gradually lead to the formation of ſome general rules with regard to this expreſſion; and that different ſounds ſhould appear to us to have a difference of character, according to the nature of the qualities with which we moſt frequently find them conjoined. This ſuppoſition will appear more probable, when we conſider, not only that the diverſities of ſounds are few, and conſequently that rules of this kind can be more eaſily formed; but particularly, that theſe diverſities

diverſities of ſounds are the immediate expreſſions of different qualities of mind in the human Voice, and conſequently, that their character becomes more certain and definite.

I believe in fact, that ſomething of this kind takes place early in life, and that long before we are able to attend to their formation, we have formed certain general aſſociations, with all the great diverſities of ſound, and that in after life, they continue to be generally expreſſive of theſe characters.

To enumerate theſe general expreſſions, is a very delicate, as well as a very difficult taſk. I hazard therefore, the following obſervations, only as hints for the proſecution of the ſubject; and as I am ſenſible of their imperfection, I am willing to reſt no concluſion upon them.

The great diviſions of Sound are into Loud and Low, Grave and Acute, Long and Short, Increaſing and diminiſhing. The two firſt diviſions are expreſſive in themſelves: the two laſt only in conjunction with others.

1. Loud Sound is connected with ideas of Power and Danger. Many objects in nature which have ſuch qualities, are diſtinguiſhed by ſuch ſounds, and this aſſociation is farther confirmed from the human Voice, in which all violent and impetuous paſſions are expreſſed in loud tones.

2. Low

2. Low Sound has a contrary expreſſion, and is connected with ideas of Weakneſs, Gentleneſs and Delicacy. This aſſociation takes its riſe not only from the obſervation of inanimate nature, or of animals, where in a great number of caſes, ſuch ſounds diſtinguiſh objects with ſuch qualities, but particularly from the human Voice, where all gentle, or delicate, or ſorrowful affections are expreſſed by ſuch tones.

3. Grave Sound is connected with ideas of Moderation, Dignity, Solemnity, *&c.* principally, I believe, from all moderate, or reſtrained, or chaſtened affections being diſtinguiſhed by ſuch tones in the human Voice.

4. Acute Sound is expreſſive of Pain, or Fear, or Surpriſe, *&c.* and generally operates by producing ſome degree of aſtoniſhment. This aſſociation alſo, ſeems principally to ariſe from our experience of ſuch connections in the human Voice.

5. Long or lengthened Sound, ſeems to me to have no expreſſion in itſelf, but only to ſignify the continuance of that quality which is ſignified by other qualities of Sound. A loud, or a low, a grave, or an acute Sound prolonged, expreſſes to us no more than the continuance of the quality which is generally ſignified by ſuch Sounds.

6. Short

6. Short or abrupt Sound has a contrary expreſſion, and ſignifies the ceſſation of the quality thus expreſſed.

7. Increaſing Sound ſignifies, in the ſame manner, the increaſe of the quality expreſſed; as

8. Decreaſing Sound ſignifies the gradual diminution of ſuch qualities.

I ſhall leave to the reader to attend to the diverſity of expreſſion which ariſes from the different combination of theſe diverſities of Sound.

The moſt Sublime of theſe Sounds appears to me to be a loud, grave, lengthened and increaſing Sound.

The leaſt Sublime, a low, acute, abrupt, or decreaſing Sound.

The moſt beautiful, a low, grave and decreaſing Sound.

The leaſt beautiful, a loud, acute, lengthened and increaſing Sound.

Such are the few general principles that, as far as I can judge, take place, with regard to the Sublimity or Beauty of Sounds. The innumerable exceptions that there are to every one of theſe rules, afford a ſufficient proof that

that this Sublimity or Beauty does not ariſe from the Sounds themſelves. Wherever, however, any new ſound occurs, it is, I think, by its approach to one or other of theſe claſſes that we determine its Sublimity or Beauty.

SECTION II.

Of COMPOSED SOUNDS, *or* MUSIC.

I.

IN the preceding illuſtrations, I have conſidered only Simple Sounds as producing the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty.

Sounds, however, are capable of being united by certain laws, and of forming a whole. To ſuch a compoſition of Sounds we give the name of MUSIC; an Art, confeſſedly, of great power, in producing Emotions both of Sublimity and Beauty, and the ſource of one of the firſt and pureſt pleaſures of which our nature is ſuſceptible.

Upon this ſubject, I ſhall beg leave to offer a few obſervations, although it is with great diffidence that I ſpeak upon an art of which I have no theoretical knowledge, and of which I can judge only from the effect that it produces on myſelf.

The eſſence of Muſic conſiſts in continued Sounds. The ſame ſound, however, when continued, has no beauty, farther than as a ſimple ſound,

ſound, and when long continued, becomes poſitively diſagreeable: Muſic therefore muſt neceſſarily conſiſt in the compoſition of different ſounds.

The Succeſſion or Compoſition of all different Sounds is not equally pleaſing. By a peculiar law of our nature, there are certain ſounds of which the union is agreeable, and others of which the union is diſagreeable. There is therefore a relation between ſounds, eſtabliſhed by nature, which cannot be violated without pain. Muſic therefore as an art intended to produce pleaſure, muſt conſiſt in the compoſition of related Sounds.

Theſe obſervations are ſufficiently obvious. There are, however, two other circumſtances in the Succeſſion of Sounds, neceſſary to conſtitute Muſic.

1. The mere Succeſſion of related Sounds is not in itſelf pleaſing. Although the Succeſſion of any two related Sounds is agreeable, yet a whole ſeries of ſuch Sounds, in which no other relation was obſerved but the relation between individual Sounds, would be abſolutely diſagreeable. To render ſuch a ſeries pleaſing, it is neceſſary that it ſhould poſſeſs Unity, or that we ſhould diſcern a relation not only between the individual Sounds, but alſo among the whole number of Sounds that conſtitute the ſeries. Although every word in language is ſignificant, and there is a neceſſary relation among words, eſtabliſhed by the rules of grammar; yet it is obviouſly poſſible to arrange words according to

grammatical rules, which yet ſhall poſſeſs no meaning. In the ſame manner, a ſeries of Sounds may be compoſed, according to their individual relations, which yet may poſſeſs no general relation, and from which, as we can diſcover no end, we can derive no pleaſure. What Thought is to the arrangement of words, the Key, or the fundamental Tone, is to the arrangement of Sounds; and as the one conſtitutes a whole in language, by eſtabliſhing a certain and definite idea, to which all the words in a ſentence bear a relation, ſo the other conſtitutes a whole in Muſic, by eſtabliſhing a definite and leading Sound, to which all the other Sounds in the ſeries bear a ſimilar relation. The firſt circumſtance, therefore, that diſtinguiſhes muſical Succeſſion, is the preſervation of this relation among all the individual Sounds, to one key or fundamental tone, which is the foundation and end of the compoſition.

2. The ſecond circumſtance which diſtinguiſhes Muſical Succeſſion, is the Regularity or Uniformity of that Succeſſion. In natural events, Succeſſion without Regularity is confuſion; and wherever Art or Deſign is ſuppoſed, is poſitively diſagreeable. In Muſic therefore, as an Art deſigned to pleaſe, Regularity or Uniformity is abſolutely neceſſary. The moſt pleaſing ſucceſſion of Sounds, without the preſervation of this Regularity, or what is commonly called Time, every one knows, is poſitively diſpleaſing. For this purpoſe, every ſuuceſſion of Sounds is ſuppoſed to be divided into certain equal intervals, which

which whether they comprehend more or fewer Notes, occupy the ſame ſpace of Time in the ſucceſſion of theſe Notes. To preſerve this Uniformity, if there are few Sounds in this Interval, theſe Sounds muſt be prolonged to occupy the whole ſpace of Time. If there are many, they muſt be ſounded quickly for the ſame reaſon. The one conſtitutes what is called Slow, the other what is called quick Time in common language. In both caſes, however, the ſpace or portion of time allotted to each Interval is uniformly the ſame, and conſtitutes the only Regularity of which Sounds in ſucceſſion are capable. A regular or uniform ſucceſſion of Sounds, therefore, related to one Key or fundamental Note, may be conſidered as conſtituting Muſical ſucceſſion, and as diſtinguiſhing it from all other ſucceſſions of Sound. The accurate perception both of this Regularity, and of this Relation, conſtitutes that Faculty which is generally called a good or a Muſical Ear.

II.

If therefore, we conſider Muſic, as ſuch a ſucceſſion of Sounds as I have now deſcribed, the two circumſtances which diſtinguiſh, or determine the nature or character of every Compoſition, are, the Nature of the Key, and the Nature of the Progreſs; the Nature of the Fundamental and governing Sound, and the Nature (or as it is commonly called) the Time, of the Succeſſion.

With

With both of theſe characteriſtics of Muſical compoſition, I apprehend, that we have many Aſſociations.

The Key or Fundamental Tone of every Compoſition, from its relation to the Tones of the human Voice, is naturally expreſſive to us of thoſe qualities or affections of mind which are ſignified by ſuch Sounds. It is perhaps unneceſſary to offer any illuſtration of this, becauſe it is ſo obvious to every man's obſervation. The relation of ſuch Tones in Muſic, to the expreſſion of the qualities of mind is indeed ſo ſtrong, that all Muſicians underſtand what Keys or what Tones are fitted for the expreſſion of thoſe affections, which it is within the reach of Muſic to expreſs. It is alſo obſervable, that they who are moſt unacquainted with Muſic, are yet able immediately to ſay, what is the affection which any particular Key is fitted to expreſs. Whether any piece of Muſic is beautiful, or not, may be a ſubject of diſpute, and very often is ſo; but whether the Sounds of which it is compoſed are gay or ſolemn, cheerful or melancholy, elevating or depreſſing, there is ſeldom any diſpute.

That the Time of muſical Compoſition is alſo expreſſive to us of various affecting or intereſting qualities, can ſcarcely be diſputed. In all ages, quick time, or a rapid ſucceſſion of Sounds has been appropriated to the expreſſion of Mirth and Gaiety: Slow time, or a ſlow ſucceſſion of Sounds, to the expreſſion of Melancholy or Sadneſs. All the paſſions or affectations therefore, which partake of either of theſe ingredients, may be generally

nerally expreſſed by ſuch circumſtances in the Compoſition, and the different degrees of ſuch Movements, may, in the ſame manner, expreſs ſuch affections as partake of any intermediate nature between theſe extremes. In what manner, the conception of ſuch affections is aſſociated with ſuch circumſtances in the progreſs of Sound, it is not my buſineſs to explain. It is ſufficient that the fact itſelf is acknowledged. I cannot avoid however, obſerving, that there is a very ſtrong analogy, not only between the progreſs of Muſical Sounds, and the progreſs of Sounds in the human Voice, in the caſe of particular paſſions; but that there is alſo a ſimilar analogy between ſuch progreſs in Sounds, and the progreſs of Thought in the caſe of ſuch Paſſions. Under the influence of pleaſing or agreeable paſſions the articulation is quick; in the caſe of contrary paſſions it is ſlow; and ſo ſtrong is this expreſſion, that we are diſpoſed to judge of the paſſion any perſon is affected with, although we do not hear the words he utters, merely from the ſlowneſs or rapidity of his articulation. It is obſervable in the ſame manner, that different paſſions have an influence upon the progreſs of our thoughts, and that they operate very ſenſibly either in accelerating or retarding this progreſs. All the paſſions which belong to pleaſure, are attended with a rapid ſucceſſion of Thoughts, and ſeem to give an unuſual degree of vigour to our Imagination. The paſſions, on the contrary, which belong to Pain, produce, in general, a ſlow and languid ſucceſſion of Thought, and ſeem to depreſs our Imagination below its uſual Tone. This is ſo obvious,

vious, that every perſon muſt have obſerved it even in converſation.

The Progreſs of muſical Sounds, therefore, may very naturally expreſs to us the nature or character of particular paſſions, not only from the analogy between ſuch progreſs of Sounds, and the progreſs of Thought; but ſtill more from its being in a great meaſure the Sign of ſuch affections of mind, by making uſe of the ſame Sounds or Tones, and the ſame varieties in the progreſs of theſe Sounds, which are in real life the Signs of ſuch affections in the human Voice. Whether theſe obſervations account for the aſſociations we have with muſical Time, or not, is at preſent a matter of no conſequence, as the fact itſelf is ſufficiently certain. The appropriation of particular Time, to particular Emotions, has taken place in every age and country, is underſtood by every man, and is not the leſs certain, though no account can be given of the reaſon of it.

It is in thus being able to expreſs both the Tone of Paſſion or Affection, and that progreſs of Thought or Sentiment which belongs to ſuch Affections, that, in as far as I am able to judge, the real foundation of muſical Expreſſion conſiſts. It is far beyond the bounds which I preſcribe myſelf in theſe obſervations, to enter into any minute inveſtigation of the different expreſſions which ſuch Sounds, and ſuch Compoſitions of Sounds in general poſſeſs. But if the reader will recollect, what are the diſtinct aſſociations which it has formerly been obſerved we have with

with Sounds or Tones, as loud or ſoft, grave or acute, and the particular aſſociations which it has now been obſerved we have with the different progreſſions of Sound, as quick, or moderate, or ſlow; and will further attend to the poſſible number of ways in which theſe different characteriſtics of Muſic may be combined, he will be fully ſenſible both of the different Emotions which it is in the power of Muſic to expreſs, and of the great variety which it affords in the expreſſion of theſe Emotions.

If I am not miſtaken, the real extent of Muſical Expreſſion, coincides in a great degree with this account of it. Theſe Signs in the human Voice are general Signs. They expreſs particular claſſes of paſſion or emotion, but they do not expreſs any particular paſſion. If we had no other means of intercourſe or of information, we might from ſuch Signs infer, that the perſon was elevated or depreſſed, gay or ſolemn, cheerful or plaintive, joyous or ſad; but we could not, I think, infer, what was the particular paſſion which produced theſe expreſſions. Muſic which can avail itſelf of theſe Signs only, can expreſs nothing more particular than the Signs themſelves. It will be found accordingly, that it is within this limit that muſical Expreſſion is really confined; that ſuch claſſes of Emotion it can perfectly expreſs; but that when it goes beyond this limit, it ceaſes to be either expreſſive or beautiful. The general Emotions of Gaiety, Elevation, Solemnity, Melancholy or Sadneſs, it is every day found to expreſs; and with regard to ſuch general expreſſions there is

never

never any miſtake; but when it attempts to go further, when it attempts to expreſs particular paſſions, Ambition, Fortitude, Pity, Love, Gratitude, &c. it either fails altogether in its effect, or is obliged to have recourſe to the aſſiſtance of words to render it intelligible. "It is in "general true (ſays Dr. Beattie) that Poetry is the "moſt immediate and the moſt accurate inter- "preter of Muſic. Without this auxiliary, a "piece of the beſt muſic, heard for the firſt "time, might be ſaid to mean ſomething, but "we ſhould not be able to ſay what. It might "incline the heart to ſenſibility, but poetry or "language would be neceſſary to improve that "ſenſibility into a real Emotion, by fixing the "fancy upon ſome definite and affecting ideas. "A fine inſtrumental ſymphony well perform- "ed, is like an oration delivered with propri- "ety, but in an unknown tongue; it may af- "fect us a little, but conveys no determinate "feeling. We are alarmed, perhaps, or melted "or ſoothed; but it is very imperfectly, becauſe "we know not why. The ſinger, by taking "up the ſame air, and applying words to it, "immediately tranſlates the oration into our "own language. Then all uncertainty vaniſh- "es, the fancy is filled with determinate ideas, "and determinate Emotions take poſſeſſion of "the heart."

Eſſay upon Poetry and Muſic, part I. *chap.* vi.

Nor is this confining the Expreſſion of which Muſic is capable, within narrower limits than is conſiſtent with our experience of its effects. Although its real power conſiſts in its imitation of thoſe

thoſe Signs of Emotion or Paſſion which take place in the human Voice, yet from its nature, it poſſeſſes advantages which theſe Signs have not, and which render it, within thoſe limits, one of the moſt powerful means which can be made uſe of, in exciting Emotion. As far as I am able to judge, theſe advantages principally conſiſt in the two following circumſtances:

1. In that variety of ſounds which it admits of, in conformity to the Key, or fundamental Tone. In the real expreſſion of Paſſion in the human Voice, the Sound is nearly uniform, or at leaſt admits of very ſmall variation. In ſo far, therefore, as mere Sound is concerned, the tone of any paſſion would in a ſhort time become unpleaſing from its uniformity; and if this effect were not forgot, in our attention to the language and ſentiments of the perſon who addreſſes us, would be perceived by every ear. In Muſic, on the contrary, the variety of related Sounds which may be introduced, not only prevents this unpleaſing effect of uniformity, and preſerves the Emotion which the prevailing tone is of itſelf able to excite, but by varying the expreſſion of it, keeps both our attention and our imagination continually awake. The one reſembles what we ſhould feel from the paſſion of any perſon, who uniformly made uſe of the ſame words, to expreſs to us what he felt. The other, what we feel from that eloquence of paſſion, where new images are continually preſenting themſelves to the mind of the ſpeaker, and a new ſource of delight is afford-

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ed to our imagination, in the perception of the agreement of thoſe images with the Emotions from which they ariſe. The effect of muſical Compoſition, in this light, reſembles, in ſome meaſure, the progreſs of an oration, in which our intereſt is continually kept alive; and if it were poſſible for us, for a moment, to forget that the performer is only repeating a leſſon, were it poſſible for us to imagine, that the ſounds we hear were the immediate expreſſions of his own Emotion, the effect of Muſic might be conceived in ſome meaſure to approach to the effect of Eloquence. To thoſe who have felt this influence, in the degree in which, in ſome ſeaſons of ſenſibility, it may be felt, there is no improbability in the accounts of the effects of Muſic in earlier times, when the profeſſions of Poetry and Muſic were not ſeparated: when the Bard, under the influence of ſome ſtrong and preſent impreſſion, accommodated his melody to the language of his own paſſion; and when the hearers under the influence of the ſame impreſſion, were prepared to go along with him, in every variety of that Emotion which he felt and expreſſed himſelf.

2. But, beſides this, there is another circumſtance in which the Expreſſion of Muſic differs materially from the Expreſſion of natural Signs, and which ſerves to add conſiderably to the ſtrength of its effect. Such natural Sounds expreſs to us immediately, if they expreſs at all, the Emotion of the perſon from whom they proceed, and therefore immediately excite our own

own Emotion. As theſe Sounds, however, have little or no variety, and excite immediately their correſpondent Emotion, it neceſſarily happens, that they become weaker as they proceed, until at laſt they become poſitively diſagreeable. In muſical Compoſition, on the contrary, as ſuch Sounds conſtitute a whole, and have all a relation to the Key, or fundamental Note in which they cloſe, they not only afford us a ſatisfaction as parts of a regular whole, but what is of much more conſequence, they keep our attention continually awake, and our expectation excited, until we arrive at that fundamental Tone, which is both the cloſe of the Compoſition, and the end of our expectation. Inſtead, therefore, (as in the former caſe) of our Emotion becoming more languid as the Sounds proceed, it becomes, in the caſe of muſical Compoſition, on the contrary, more ſtrong. The peculiar affection we feel is kept continually increaſing, by means of the expectation which is excited for the perfection of this whole, and the one and the other are only gratified when we arrive at this deſired and expected end.

In this reſpect, indeed, muſical expreſſion is in itſelf ſuperior even to the Expreſſion of Language; and were the Paſſions or Affections which it can expreſs, as definite or particular, as thoſe which can be communicated by Words, it may well be doubted, whether there is any Compoſition of Words which could ſo powerfully affect us, as ſuch a Compoſition of Sounds. In Language, every perſon under the influence of paſſion or Emotion, naturally begins with expreſſing

expreſſing the cauſe of his Emotion; an obſervation, which every one muſt have made in real life, and which might eaſily be confirmed by inſtances from Dramatic Poetry. In this caſe, our Emotion is immediately at its height, and as it has no longer any aſſiſtance from Curioſity, naturally cools as the Speaker goes on. In Muſic, on the contrary, the manner of this communication reſembles the artful, but intereſting conduct of the Epic or Dramatic Poem, where we find ourſelves at once involved in the progreſs of ſome great Intereſt, where our Curioſity is wound up to its utmoſt to diſcover the event, and where at every ſtep this Intereſt increaſes, from bringing us nearer to the expected end. That the effect of muſical Compoſition is ſimilar, that while it excites Emotion from the nature of the Sounds, it excites alſo an increaſing expectation and intereſt from the conduct of theſe Sounds, and from their continued dependence upon the cloſe, has, I am perſuaded, been felt in the ſtrongeſt manner by every perſon of common ſenſibility, and indeed is in itſelf extremely obvious from the effect which is univerſally produced by any pathetic compoſition upon the Audience. The increaſing ſilence,—the impatience of interruption, which are ſo evident as the compoſition goes on,—the arts by which the performer is almoſt inſtinctively led, to enhance the merit of the cloſe, by ſeeming to depart from it,—the ſuppreſſion of every ſign of emotion till the whole is completed, and the violence either of ſenſibility or applauſe, that are immediately diſplayed, whenever a full and harmonious cloſe is produced;

duced; all teſtify in the ſtrongeſt manner the increaſing nature of the Emotion, and the ſingular advantage which Muſic thus poſſeſſes, in keeping the attention and the ſenſibility ſo powerfully awake.

Such ſeems to me, the natural effect of Muſic on the human Mind: in expreſſing to us thoſe Affections or Emotions, which are ſignified by the tones of the Voice, and the progreſs of articulate Sounds; limited indeed in the reach of its imitation or expreſſion, and far inferior to language, in being confined to the expreſſion only of general Emotions; but powerful within thoſe limits, beyond any other means we know, both by the variety which it can afford, and the continued and increaſing intereſt which it can raiſe.

It is obvious, that the obſervations which I have now offered, relate principally to vocal Muſic, and to that ſimple ſpecies of Compoſition which is commonly called Song or Air. I believe it will be found that this is in reality, not only the moſt expreſſive ſpecies of Compoſition, but the only one which affects the minds of uninſtructed Men. It is the only Muſic of early Ages, the only Muſic of the common People, the only Muſic which pleaſes us in Infancy and early Youth. It is a conſiderable time before we diſcern the beauties of more artificial Compoſition, or indeed before we underſtand it. In ſuch kinds of compoſition, a young perſon, whatever may be his natural taſte, ſeldom diſcovers any continued relation. He is diſpoſed

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to divide it in his own mind into different parts; to conſider it as a collection of diſtinct airs; and he is apt to judge of it, not as a whole, but as the ſeparate parts of it are expreſſive to him or not. There is nothing accordingly more common, than to find young people, expreſſing their admiration of a particular ſtrain or diviſion of the Compoſition and ſuch ſtrains are always the moſt ſimple, and thoſe which approach moſt to the nature of Airs; but it is ſeldom, I believe, that they are able to follow the whole of a Concerto, or that they are found to expreſs their admiration of it as a whole.

With ſuch a ſpecies of Compoſition however, they who are inſtructed in Muſic have many and very intereſting aſſociations. A Song or an Air leads us always to think of the Sentiment, and ſeldom diſpoſes us to think of any thing elſe. An Overture or a Concerto, diſpoſes us to think of the Compoſer. It is a work in which much invention, much judgment, and much taſte may be diſplayed; and it may have therefore to thoſe who are capable of judging of it, all that pleaſing effect upon the mind which the compoſition of an excellent Poem or Oration has upon the minds of thoſe who are judges of ſuch works. The qualities of Skill, of Novelty, of Learning, of Invention, of Taſte, may, in this manner, be expreſſed by ſuch Compoſitions; qualities, it is obvious, which are the foundation both of Sublimity and Beauty, in other caſes, and which may undoubtedly be the foundation of ſuch characters in

in muſical Compoſition, even although it ſhould have no other or more affecting expreſſion to recommend it. Nor is this all; ſuch compoſitions are not read in private, but are publicly recited. There is therefore the additional circumſtance of the performance to be attended to; a circumſtance of no mean conſequence, and of which every man will acknowledge the importance, who recollects the different effects the ſame compoſition has produced on him, when performed by different people. There is therefore, the Judgment, the Taſte, the expreſſion of the Performer, in addition to all thoſe different qualities of excellence which may diſtinguiſh the Compoſition; and the whole effect is ſimilar to that which every one has felt from any celebrated piece of Poetry, when recited by an able and harmonious Declaimer. Even to the very worſt muſic, this gives an effect, and the effect may eaſily be conceived when the Muſic alſo is good.

III.

While Muſic has this power in expreſſing ſome of the moſt intereſting and affecting paſſions of the human Mind; and is, in its more artificial ſtate, ſignificant to us of ſo many pleaſing and delightful qualities, it will not, I hope, be conſidered as raſh, if I preſume to think that it is from theſe aſſociations that it derives all its power in producing the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty, and that wherever it does produce either of theſe effects, it is by being

ing expreſſive to us either of ſome intereſting paſſion, or of ſome valuable and pleaſing quality in the Compoſition, or the performance.

When any muſical Compoſition affects us with the Emotions either of Sublimity or Beauty, it ſhould ſeem, that this effect muſt ariſe from one or other of the following cauſes: 1*ſt*, From the nature of the ſingle or individual Sounds which enter into the Compoſition. 2*dly*, From the nature of the Compoſition itſelf, or from thoſe laws, which, as has before been obſerved, are neceſſary to render a ſucceſſion of Sounds agreeable, or to conſtitute Muſic; or, 3*dly*, From the aſſociations we connect with it, or the qualities of which it is expreſſive to us. That the Beauty or Sublimity of ſingle ſounds, is not a quality of the Sounds themſelves, but ariſes from their expreſſion, I have already endeavoured to illuſtrate. That the Beauty of muſical Compoſition does not ariſe from the ſecond of thoſe cauſes, or from the circumſtances of the Compoſition itſelf, and that it is altogether to be aſcribed to the qualities of which it is expreſſive to us, I am diſpoſed to conclude from the following conſiderations:

1. If the Beauty of Muſic aroſe from the regular Compoſition of Sounds, according to thoſe laws, which are neceſſary to conſtitute Muſic or an agreeable ſucceſſion of Sounds, it would neceſſarily follow, that every compoſition where theſe laws were obſerved would be beautiful. Every man, however, knows, that there is a very

very wide diſtinction between Muſic and beautiful Muſic. If a Compoſition is expreſſive of no ſentiment, a common hearer feels no Beauty from it: If it is quite common, and has neither novelty nor ſkill in it, a Connoiſſeur in Muſic feels as little. If it has neither one nor other, all the world pronounce it bad Muſic. Yet ſuch a Compoſition may be perfectly regular, may be in obedience to the ſtricteſt laws of Compoſition; and will give to every one that inferior pleaſure, which ariſes from a regular ſucceſſion of Sounds. As there is therefore a very evident diſtinction between that mechanical pleaſure which we receive from mere Muſic, and that delight which we feel from Muſic when Beautiful or Sublime, it is obvious, that the mere regular Compoſition of related Sounds, is not the cauſe of the Emotions either of Sublimity or Beauty.

2. If the beauty of Muſic aroſe from any of thoſe qualities, either of Sound, or of the Compoſition of Sounds, which are immediately perceivable by the Ear, it is obvious, that this would be expreſſed in Language, and that the terms by which ſuch Muſic was characterized, would be ſignificant of ſome quality or qualities diſcernible by the Ear: If, on the contrary, this Beauty ariſes from the intereſting or affecting qualities of which it is expreſſive to us, ſuch qualities, in the ſame manner, ought, in common language, to be aſſigned as the cauſes of this Emotion: and the terms by which ſuch Muſic is characteriſed ought to be ſignificant of ſuch qualities. That the laſt is the caſe, I think

there can be no diſpute. The terms Plaintive, Tender, Cheerful, Gay, Elevating, Solemn, &c, are not only conſtantly applied to every kind of Muſic, that is either Sublime or Beautiful; but it is in fact by ſuch terms only that men ever characteriſe the Compoſitions from which they receive ſuch Emotions. If any man were aſked what was it that rendered ſuch an Air ſo beautiful; he would immediately anſwer, becauſe it was Plaintive, Solemn, Cheerful, *&c.* but he never would think of deſcribing its peculiar nature as a Compoſition of Sounds. In the ſame manner, if he were accounting to any perſon for the Beauty or Sublimity of any Compoſition, if he were to deſcribe it in the moſt accurate way poſſible as having particular characters of Compoſition, he might indeed make him wonder at his learning, but he would leave him as ignorant as before, with regard to the ſource of its Beauty. Were he to tell him on the other hand, that it was expreſſive of Melancholy, Gaiety or Tenderneſs, he would make him underſtand at once the reaſon of his Emotion. If the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic aroſe from the laws of its Compoſition, the very reverſe of all this would obviouſly be the caſe.

It is obſervable, in the ſame manner, that even they who are beſt acquainted with the principles of Compoſition, and who are moſt diſpoſed to forget the end, in attention to the rules of the ſcience, yet never think of expreſſing the Beauty or Sublimity of any piece of Muſic, by terms ſignificant of its nature as a Compoſition, but by ſuch as are ſignificant of ſome pleaſing or intereſting

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Aſſociation. If they forget the Expreſſion of Muſic, they never forget the merits of the Compoſer. When they ſpeak therefore of the Sublimity or Beauty of any ſuch Compoſition, if they are farther queſtioned upon the ſubject, it will always be found, that it is either the Learning, the Invention, or the Taſte which it diſplays, that they aſſign as the foundation of their admiration, or ſome other quality either in the compoſition or performance, perfectly diſtinct from the mere qualities either of Sound or Compoſition. This univerſal language of mankind, is not only a proof of the connection between the Beauty and Sublimity of Muſic, and the Expreſſions which it conveys; but it is impoſſible that this language ſhould ever have been either employed, or underſtood, if the Sublimity or Beauty of Muſic were independent of ſuch Expreſſions.

3. If the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic depended ſolely upon the nature of its compoſition, and was independent of the qualities of which it is expreſſive, it would neceſſarily happen, that the ſame compoſitions muſt always be beautiful or ſublime, which once were ſo; and that in every ſituation they muſt produce the ſame Emotion, in the ſame manner as every other object of Senſe uniformly produces its correſpondent ſenſation. The truth is, however, that no ſuch thing takes place, and, that, on the contrary, Muſic is then only beautiful or ſublime, when it is accommodated to the Emotion which it is intended to expreſs. If the Paſſion of Revenge, for inſtance, were expreſſed by the moſt beautiful compoſition of Sounds conceivable, which either naturally, or from

from habit, were conſidered as expreſſive of Tenderneſs, every man, inſtead of being affected with its beauty, would laugh at its abſurdity. In the ſame manner, if Love or tenderneſs were expreſſed by any Sounds, or compoſition of Sounds, generally appropriated to the expreſſion of Rage, or Revenge, however ſublime they might be according to their own expreſſion, they would undoubtedly ceaſe to be ſo by ſuch an appropriation. Inſtances of the ſame kind might eaſily be multiplied. If we could ſuppoſe, that by a miracle, the preſent ſyſtem of Sounds in the human Voice were altogether changed; that the Tones which now expreſs Mirth, ſhould then expreſs Melancholy, the Sounds which now expreſs Rage, ſhould then expreſs Tenderneſs, *&c.* and that a ſimilar revolution ſhould at the ſame time take place in the Expreſſion of the progreſs of Sounds, I think every man will allow, that the whole ſyſtem of Muſic muſt of neceſſity be changed; that a new Muſic muſt ariſe accommodated to this change, in the ſyſtem of expreſſive Sounds, and that if it were not changed, inſtead of affording us any Emotions of Beauty or Sublimity, it would either be unintelligible, or abſolutely abſurd; yet in ſuch a caſe, all that ariſes from the mere mechanical Structure of Sounds would remain, all that is immediately perceived by the Ear, either in Sound itſelf, or in the compoſition of Sound, would have undergone no revolution. There cannot well be a ſtronger proof, that the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic ariſes from the qualities which it expreſſes, and not from the means by which they are expreſſed.

4. It

4. It is obſervable, that the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic is felt by thoſe who have no perception of the relation of Sounds, either in point of Tune or Time, and who conſequently muſt be unconſcious of any pleaſure that ariſes from the mere compoſition of Sounds. Every one who will take the trouble of enquiring, will find many people who have (as it is generally called) no muſical ear, who are unable to learn the ſimpleſt tune, and who can ſcarcely diſtinguiſh one tune from another, who are yet ſenſible to the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic, and who feel delight from different kinds of Compoſition. The want of a Muſical ear is not uncommon; but I believe there is no inſtance of any perſon who is inſenſible either to the Expreſſion of Different Tones in the human Voice, or who is not differently affected by the different progreſs of Sounds. In ſuch caſes, although Muſic has not the ſame extent of Expreſſion to them, that it has to thoſe who are born with a good ear, yet ſtill it has ſome Expreſſion; and the proof of it is, that although they cannot tell whether any note is juſt or not, or whether the time of any compoſition is perfectly preſerved, they can ſtill tell whether a ſong is gay or plaintive, whether fitted to inſpire mirth or melancholy. They have therefore that degree of delight from it, which the ſcenes of Nature uſually inſpire, where a general but indiſtinct relation is obſerved to ſome intereſting or affecting qualities, and where, in conſequence of this relation, ſuch ſcenes naturally tend to excite or to encourage a correſpondent Emotion; but they are inſenſible to that greater delight, which, as has already been ſhown, every man of a good

a good Ear, feels both from the variety of this Expreſſion, and from the continued and increaſing intereſt which it awakens. If the Sublimity or Beauty of Muſic aroſe from the diſcernment of ſuch relations as conſtitute the laws of compoſition, it is obvious that they who are incapable of diſcerning ſuch relations, would be incapable at the ſame time, of diſcovering either its Sublimity or Beauty.

In the preceding obſervations, I have conſidered only the permanent Aſſociations we have with Muſical Compoſition, or the Expreſſions which are every where felt both in the Tone and the Time of ſuch ſucceſſions of Sound, from their analogy to the character and progreſs of Sound in the human Voice. With Muſic, however, we have often many accidental Aſſociations, both individual and national; and the influence of ſuch Aſſociations upon our opinions of the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic might be ſhown from many conſiderations. On the one hand, from the dependence of the Beauty of Muſic, upon the temporary or habitual diſpoſitions of our minds, —from the different effect which is produced by the ſame Compoſition, according to the Aſſociations we happen to connect with it,—and from the tendency which all national Muſic has to render thoſe who are accuſtomed to it, inſenſible to the beauty of any foreign Muſic, from their aſſociation of particular ſentiments, with peculiar characters or modes of Compoſition: And on the other hand, from the influence of individual or national Aſſociations, in increaſing the Sublimity or Beauty of Muſic, both by increaſing its natural

natural Expreſſions, and by rendering theſe Expreſſions more definite and preciſe. I am unwilling, however, to ſwell theſe very imperfect remarks, by illuſtrations which every one can ſo eaſily proſecute for himſelf.

From the whole, I am induced to conclude, that Muſic is productive to us of two diſtinct and and ſeparate Pleaſures:

1. Of that mechanical Pleaſure, which by the conſtitution of our nature accompanies the perception of a regular ſucceſſion of related Sounds.

2. Of that Pleaſure which ſuch Compoſitions of Sound may produce, either by the Expreſſion of ſome pathetic or intereſting Affection, or by being the Sign of ſome pleaſing or valuable Quality, either in the Compoſition or the Performance.

That it is to this laſt Source, the Beauty or Sublimity of Muſic is to be aſcribed, or that it is Beautiful or Sublime only, when it is expreſſive of ſome pleaſing or intereſting Quality, I hope is evident from the preceding obſervations.

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

Of the OBJECTS *of* SIGHT.

THE greateſt part of the external objects, in which we diſcover Sublimity or Beauty, are ſuch as are perceived by the Senſe of Sight. It has even been imagined by ſome Philoſophers, that it is to ſuch objects only that the name of Beauty is properly applied, and that it is only from analogy that the ſame term is applied to the objects of our other Senſes. This opinion however, ſeems at firſt ſight ill founded. The terms Beauty and Sublimity are applied by all men to Sounds, and even ſometimes to Smells. In our own experience, we very often find, that the ſame Emotion is produced by Sounds, which is produced by Forms or Colours; and the nature of language ſufficiently ſhows, that this is conformable alſo to general experience. There ſeems no reaſon therefore for limiting the objects of Sublimity or Beauty to the ſole claſs of viſible objects.

It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that by far the greateſt number of theſe objects are ſuch as we diſcover by means of this Senſe; nor does it ſeem difficult to aſſign the reaſon of this ſuperiority. By the reſt of our ſenſes, we diſcover only ſingle qualities of objects; but by the Senſe of Seeing, we diſcover all that aſſemblage of qualities

ties which conſtitute, in our imaginations, the peculiar nature of ſuch objects. By our other ſenſes, we diſcover, in general, ſuch qualities, only when the bodies are in contact with us; but the Senſe of Sight affords us a very wide field of obſervation, and enables us to make them the objects of attention, when they are at very conſiderable diſtances from ourſelves. It is natural, therefore, that the greater power of this Senſe ſhould diſpoſe us to greater confidence in it, and that the qualities of bodies which we diſcover by means of it, ſhould more powerfully impreſs themſelves upon our imagination and memory, than thoſe ſingle qualities which we diſcover by the means of our other Senſes. The viſible qualities of objects, accordingly, become to us not only the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of external bodies, but they become alſo in a great meaſure the Signs of all their other qualities; and by recalling to our minds the qualities ſignified, affect us in ſome degree with the ſame Emotion which the objects themſelves can excite. Not only the ſmell of the Roſe, or the Violet, is expreſſed to us by their Colours and Forms; but the utility of a Machine, the elegance of a Deſign, the proportion of a Column, the ſpeed of the Horſe, the ferocity of the Lion, even all the qualities of the human mind are naturally expreſſed to us by certain viſible appearances; becauſe our experience has taught us, that ſuch qualities are connected with ſuch appearances, and the preſence of the one immediately ſuggeſts to us the idea of the other. Such viſible qualities, therefore, are gradually conſidered as the Signs

of

of other qualities, and are productive to us of the ſame Emotions with the qualities they ſignify.

But, beſides this, it is alſo to be obſerved, that by this ſenſe, we not only diſcover the nature of individual objects, and therefore naturally aſſociate their qualities with their viſible appearance; but that by it alſo we diſcover the relation of objects to each other; and that hence a great variety of objects in nature become expreſſive of qualities which do not immediately belong to themſelves, but to the objects with which we have found them connected. Thus, for inſtance, it is by this ſenſe we diſcover that the Eagle inhabits among Rocks and Mountains; that the Red-breaſt leaves the Woods in Winter, to ſeek ſhelter and food among the dwellings of Men; that the ſong of the Nightingale is peculiar to the Evening and the Night, *&c.* In conſequence of this permanent connection, theſe animals acquire a character from the ſcenes they inhabit, or the ſeaſons in which they appear, and are expreſſive to us in ſome meaſure of the character of theſe ſeaſons and ſcenes. It is hence that ſo many objects become expreſſive, which perhaps in themſelves would never have been ſo; that the Curfew is ſo ſolemn from accompanying the cloſe of the day, the twitter of the Swallow ſo cheerful, from its being heard in the Morning, the bleating of Sheep, the call of the Goat, the lowing of Kine, ſo beautiful from their occurring in paſtoral or romantic Situations; in ſhort, that the greateſt number of natural objects acquire their expreſſion from their connection with particular or affecting ſcenes.

As,

As, in this way, the viſible qualities of objects become expreſſive to us of all the qualities which they poſſeſs; and beſides, in ſo many caſes receive expreſſion from their connection with other objects, it is extremely natural, that ſuch qualities ſhould form the greateſt and moſt numerous claſs of the objects of Material Beauty.

I proceed to a more particular inveſtigation of the Sublimity and Beauty of ſome of the moſt remarkable Claſſes of theſe Qualities.

SEC-

SECTION I.

Of the BEAUTY *of* COLOURS.

THE greateſt part of Colours are connected with a kind of eſtabliſhed Imagery in our Minds, and are conſidered as expreſſive of many very pleaſing and affecting Qualities.

Theſe Aſſociations may perhaps be included in the following Enumeration: 1*ſt*, Such as ariſe from the nature of the objects thus permanently coloured. 2*dly*, Such as ariſe from ſome analogy between certain Colours, and certain Diſpoſitions of Mind; and, 3*dly*, Such as ariſe from accidental connections, whether national or particular.

1. When we have been accuſtomed to ſee any object capable of exciting Emotion, diſtinguiſhed by ſome fixed or permanent Colour, we are apt to extend to the Colour the Qualities of the object thus coloured; and to feel from it, when ſeparated, ſome degree of the ſame Emotion which is properly excited by the object itſelf. Inſtances of this kind are within every perſon's obſervation. White, as it is the colour of Day, is expreſſive to us of the Cheerfulneſs or Gaiety which the return of Day brings. Black, as the colour of Darkneſs, is expreſſive of Gloom and Melancholy. The Colour of the Heavens, in ſerene Weather,

Weather, is Blue: Blue therefore is expreſſive to us of ſomewhat of the ſame pleaſing and temperate character. Green is the colour of the Earth in Spring: It is conſequently expreſſive to us of ſome of thoſe delightful Images which we aſſociate with that Seaſon. The colours of Vegetables and Minerals acquire, in the ſame manner, a kind of character from the character of the ſpecies which they diſtinguiſh. The expreſſion of thoſe colours, which are the ſigns of particular paſſions in the human Countenance, and which, from this connection, derive their effect, every one is acquainted with.

2. There are many Colours which derive expreſſion from ſome analogy we diſcover between them and certain affections of the human Mind. Soft or Strong, Mild or Bold, Gay or Gloomy, Cheerful or Solemn, *&c.* are terms in all Languages applied to Colours; terms obviouſly metaphorical, and the uſe of which indicates their connection with particular qualities of Mind. In the ſame manner, different degrees or ſhades of the ſame Colour have ſimilar characters, as Strong, or Temperate, or Gentle, *&c.* In conſequence of this Aſſociation, which is in truth ſo ſtrong that it is to be found among all Mankind, ſuch Colours derive a character from this reſemblance, and produce in our Minds ſome faint degree of the ſame Emotion, which the qualities they expreſs are fitted to produce.

3. Many Colours acquire character from accidental Aſſociation. Purple, for inſtance, has acquired a character of Dignity, from its accidental connection

connection with the dreſs of Kings. The colours of Ermine have a ſimilar character from the ſame cauſe. The colours in every country which diſtinguiſh the dreſs of Magiſtrates, Judges, *&c.* acquire dignity in the ſame manner. Scarlet, in this country, as the Colour which diſtinguiſhes the dreſs of the Army, has, in ſome meaſure, a character correſpondent to its employment; and it was perhaps this Aſſociation, (though unknown to himſelf,) that induced the blind man, mentioned by Mr. Locke, to liken his notion of Scarlet to the Sound of a Trumpet. Every perſon will, in the ſame manner, probably recollect particular Colours which are pleaſing to him, from their having been worn by People whom we loved, or from ſome other accidental Aſſociation.

In theſe ſeveral ways, Colours become ſignificant to us of many intereſting or affecting Qualities, and excite in us ſome degree of the Emotions which ſuch qualities in themſelves are fitted to produce. Whether ſome Colours may not of themſelves produce agreeable Senſations, and others diſagreeable Senſations, I am not anxious to diſpute: but wherever Colours are felt as producing the Emotion of Beauty, that it is by means of their Expreſſion, and not from any original fitneſs in the Colours themſelves to produce this effect, may perhaps be obvious from the following conſiderations:

1. The different ſentiments of Mankind, with regard to the Beauty of Colours, are inconſiſtent with the opinion that ſuch qualities are beautiful in

in themſelves. It is impoſſible to infer, becauſe any particular Colour is beautiful in one country, that it will alſo be beautiful in another: and there are in fact many inſtances where the ſame Colour produces very different opinions of Beauty in different races of Men. Black, to us is in general, an unpleaſant Colour. In Spain and in Venice, it is otherwiſe. Yellow, is to us, at leaſt in dreſs, a diſagreeable Colour. In China, it is the favourite Colour. White, is to us extremely Beautiful. In China, on the contrary, it is extremely diſagreeable. Inſtances of the ſame kind muſt have occurred to every perſon.

If we enquire, on the other hand, what is the reaſon of this difference of opinion, we ſhall uniformly find, that it ariſes from the different Aſſociations which theſe different people have with ſuch Colours; and that their opinion of their Beauty is permanently regulated by the nature of the Qualities of which they are expreſſive. Black is to us, an unpleaſant Colour, becauſe it is the Colour appropriated to Mourning. In Venice and Spain, it is the Colour which diſtinguiſhes the dreſs of the Great. Yellow, is in China, the imperial Colour, and ſacred to the Emperor and his property: it is therefore aſſociated with ideas of Magnificence and Royalty. Among us it has no diſtinct Aſſociation, and is therefore beautiful or otherwiſe, only according to its degree or ſhade. White is beautiful to us in a ſupreme degree, as emblematical both of Innocence and Cheerfulneſs. In China, on the other hand, it is the Colour appropriated to Mourning, and conſequently,

ſequently, very far from being generally beautiful. In the ſame manner, wherever any peculiar Colours are permanently favourite, there will always be found ſome pleaſing Aſſociation which the People have with that Colour, and of which they, in ſome meaſure, conſider it as ſignificant.

2. It is farther obſervable, that no Colours, in fact, are beautiful, but ſuch as are expreſſive to us of pleaſing or intereſting Qualities. All Colours obviouſly, are not beautiful: the ſame Colours are beautiful only when they are expreſſive of ſuch qualities; and, in general, I believe it will be found, that among all the variety of Colours we are acquainted with, thoſe only are beautiful which have ſimilar expreſſions.

The common Colours, for inſtance, of many indifferent things which ſurround us, of the Earth, of Stone, of Wood, *&c.* have no kind of Beauty, and are never mentioned as ſuch. The things themſelves are ſo indifferent to us, that they excite no kind of Emotion, and of conſequence, their Colours produce no greater Emotion, as the ſigns of ſuch qualities, than the qualities themſelves. The Colours, in the ſame manner, which diſtinguiſh the ordinary dreſs of the common People, are never conſidered as Beautiful. It is the Colours only of the Dreſs of the Great, of the Opulent, or of diſtinguiſhed profeſſions, which are ever conſidered in this light. The Colours of common furniture in the ſame way, are never beautiful: it is the Colours only

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of faſhionable, or coſtly, magnificent Furniture, which are ever conſidered as ſuch.

It is obſervable, farther, that even the moſt beautiful Colours, (or thoſe which are expreſſive to us of the moſt pleaſing Aſſociations,) ceaſe to appear beautiful whenever they are familiar, or when the objects which they diſtinguiſh have ceaſed to produce their uſual Emotions. The Bluſh of the Roſe, the Blue of a ſerene Sky, the Green of the Spring, are Beautiful only when they are new, or unfamiliar. In a ſhort time we obſerve them with the ſame indifference, that we do the moſt common and unnoticed Colours. That, in the ſame manner, our perception of their Beauty, depends on the ſtate of our own Minds, and that it is only in ſeaſons of ſenſibility that we are conſcious of it, is a fact which every man knows ſo well from his own experience, that it would be needleſs to illuſtrate it.

It may be obſerved alſo, that no new colour is ever beautiful, until we have acquired ſome pleaſing aſſociation with it. This is peculiarly obſervable in the Article of Dreſs; and indeed it is the beſt inſtance of it, becauſe in ſuch caſes, no other circumſtance intervenes by which the experiment can be influenced. Every man muſt have obſerved, that in the great variety of new colours which the caprice of Faſhion is perpetually introducing, no new colour appears at firſt as beautiful. We feel, on the contrary, a kind of diſappointment, when we ſee

ſuch a colour in the dreſs of thoſe who regulate the Faſhions, inſtead of that which uſed to diſtinguiſh them; and even although the colour ſhould be ſuch, as in other ſubjects we conſider as beautiful, our diſappointment ſtill overbalances the pleaſure it might give. A few weeks, even a few days alter our opinion; as ſoon as it is generally adopted by thoſe who lead the public Taſte, and has become of conſequence the mark of Rank and Elegance, it immediately becomes beautiful. This, it is obſervable, is not peculiar to colours that in themſelves may be agreeable; for it often happens, that the caprice of Faſhion leads us to admire colours that are diſagreeable, and that not only in themſelves, but alſo from the Aſſociations with which they are connected. A plain man would ſcarcely believe, that the Colours of a glaſs Bottle, of a dead Leaf, of Clay, &c. could ever be beautiful; yet within theſe few years, not only theſe, but ſome much more unpleaſant colours that might be mentioned, have been faſhionable and admired. As ſoon, however, as the Faſhion changes, as ſoon as they whoſe Rank or Accompliſhments give this fictitious value to the Colours they wear, think proper to deſert them, ſo ſoon the Beauty of the Colour is at an end. A new Colour ſucceeds; a new diſappointment attends its firſt appearance; its beauty is gradually acknowledged; and the Colour which was formerly the favourite, ſinks into neglect and contempt. If the faculty by which the Beauty of Colours is perceived, had any analogy to a Senſe, it is obvious, that ſuch

variations

variations in our opinion of their Beauty could not take place.

3. When the particular Aſſociations we have with ſuch Colours are deſtroyed, their Beauty is deſtroyed at the ſame time.

The different machines, inſtruments, &c. which miniſter to the convenience of Life, have in general, from the materials of which they are compoſed, or from the uſes to which they are applied, a fixed and determinate Colour. This Colour becomes accordingly in ſome degree beautiful, from its being the Sign of ſuch qualities; and although this effect is, in a great meaſure, loſt from the frequency of obſervation, it is ſtill obſervable upon many occaſions. Change the accuſtomed Colour of ſuch objects, and every man feels a kind of diſappointment. This is ſo ſtrong, that even if a Colour more generally beautiful is ſubſtituted, yet ſtill our diſſatisfaction is the ſame, and the new colour, inſtead of being beautiful, becomes the reverſe. Roſe-colour, for inſtance, is a more beautiful Colour than that of Mahogany; yet if any man were to paint his doors and windows with Roſe-colour, he would certainly not add to their Beauty. The Colour of a poliſhed ſteel grate is agreeable, but is not in itſelf very beautiful. Suppoſe it painted green, or violet, or crimſon, all of them colours much more beautiful, and the beauty of it is altogether deſtroyed. The Colours of Cedar, of Mahogany, of Sattin-wood, are not nearly ſo beautiful as many

ny other Colours that may be mentioned. There is no Colour, however, with which ſuch woods can be painted, that would be ſo beautiful as the Colours of the woods themſelves; becauſe they are very valuable, and the Colours are in ſome meaſure ſignificant to us of this value. Inſtances of this kind are innumerable.

There are different profeſſions in every country, which are diſtinguiſhed by different coloured dreſſes. Whatever may have led to this Appropriation, and however fanciful and extravagant it may ſometimes be, after it is eſtabliſhed, there is felt a kind of propriety in the dreſs; and it is ſtrongly aſſociated in our minds with the qualities which ſuch profeſſions ſeem to indicate. We are in ſome meaſure diſappointed, therefore, when we ſee a profeſſional man not in the dreſs of his profeſſion; and when he is in this dreſs, we conceive that there is a propriety and beauty in ſuch a Colour. Change the Colours of theſe ſeveral dreſſes, and all this ſpecies of Beauty is deſtroyed. We ſhould not only laugh at the ſuppoſition of the Army and Navy being dreſſed in black, and the Church and the Bar in ſcarlet; but we ſhould feel alſo a diſcontent, as if theſe Colours had in themſelves a ſeparate Expreſſion, and were in theſe caſes miſapplied. Even in reverſing the dreſs of individuals of theſe different profeſſions, the whole Beauty of their dreſs is deſtroyed; and we are conſcious of a feeling of impropriety, as if the qualities which are peculiar to ſuch profeſſions were neceſſarily connected with the dreſs they wear. So ſtrong is this

aſſociation

aſſociation even in trifles, and ſo naturally do Colours become expreſſive to us of the qualities with which we have found them generally connected.

In natural objects the ſame circumſtance is very apparent. There are Colours perhaps more generally beautiful than thoſe which diſtinguiſh Trees, or Rocks, or Waters, or Cottages, or Ruins, or any of the ordinary ingredients of rural ſcenery; yet no Colours, but the natural, could poſſibly be beautiful, in the imitation of ſuch ſcenes; becauſe no other Colours could be expreſſive to us of thoſe qualities which are the ſources of our Emotion from ſuch objects in Nature. That all the Beauty, in the ſame manner, of Plants or Animals, would be deſtroyed, if any new Colours, however generally beautiful, were ſubſtituted in the place of thoſe by which Nature has diſtinguiſhed their different claſſes, and which are of conſequence aſſociated in our minds with all the qualities which they poſſeſs, is ſo obvious, that it is altogether unneceſſary to attempt the illuſtration of it. That this principle applies alſo to the Colours of Dreſs, and that the ſame Colour is beautiful or not, as the Expreſſion which it has, is ſuited to the character or ſituation of the perſon who wears it, every perſon may ſatisfy himſelf by a little attention. As thus there is no Colour whatever, which in all ſituations is beautiful, and as, on the contrary, the Beauty of every Colour is deſtroyed, whenever the aſſociations we have with it are diſſolved, it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that the beauty of ſuch qualities

qualities ariſes from their Expreſſion, and not from any original fitneſs in them to produce this Emotion.

4. If the Beauty of Colours aroſe from any original fitneſs in them to produce this Emotion, it is apparent, that they who are incapable of ſuch Perceptions, muſt be incapable of ſuch Emotion. That the blind, however, may receive the ſame delight, from the ideas which they aſſociate with Colours, that they do who ſee, is a fact which I think every one will be convinced of, who reads the poems of Dr. Blacklock. No man who is not acquainted with the hiſtory of their ingenious Author, could perceive that he had the misfortune to loſe his ſight in early infancy. That from converſation, and from the peruſal of books of poetry, it was poſſible for him to learn the diſtinguiſhing colours of certain objects, and to apply them with ſufficient propriety in his own verſes, I do not deny; but the circumſtance of importance at preſent is this, that his poetry is full of the ſame ſentiments, and expreſſes the ſame admiration with regard to the different viſible qualities of matter with that of Poets who have had no ſuch defect; and that the ſame power is aſcribed to them in producing the Emotions of Beauty, and with as great accuracy with regard to particular inſtances, as in the compoſitions of thoſe who have had the Senſe of Sight in its fulleſt perfection. If our perception of the Beauty of Colours aroſe from ſome original fitneſs in ſuch qualities to produce this Emotion, it is obvious, that the blind muſt be as incapable

incapable of perceiving this beauty, as of perceiving the Colours themſelves; but if the Beauty of Colours ariſes from the aſſociations we connect with them, this fact, in the caſe of Dr. Blacklock, admits of a very ſimple ſolution. From reading, and from converſation, he has acquired the ſame aſſociations with the Words that expreſs ſuch Colours, as we have with the Colours themſelves; that the word White, for inſtance, ſignifies a quality in objects expreſſive of Cheerfulneſs and Innocence,—the word Purple, the quality of Majeſty,—the word Black, the quality of Gloom and Melancholy, *&c.* In this caſe, it is obvious, that he may feel the ſame Emotions from the uſe of theſe words, that we do from the Colours which they expreſs; and that from the permanence of theſe aſſociations in a great variety of caſes, he may apply the terms with ſufficient propriety, either in ſublime or beautiful deſcription. As this is in reality the caſe, it ſeems to be a very ſtrong confirmation of the opinion, that the Beauty of ſuch qualities ariſes from the aſſociations we connect with them, and not from any original or independent Beauty in the Colours themſelves.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

Of FORMS.

OF all material Qualities, that which is moſt generally, and moſt naturally productive of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty, is Form. Other qualities may be ſeparated from moſt objects, without deſtroying their nature: but the Form of every material object, in a great meaſure, conſtitutes its nature and eſſence, and cannot be deſtroyed, without deſtroying the individual ſubject to which it belongs. From whatever cauſe, therefore, the Beauty of any material object proceeds, it is natural to aſcribe it to the Form, or to that quality which moſt intimately belongs to the object, and conſtitutes its eſſence to our ſenſes. The common opinion, therefore, undoubtedly is, that Forms in themſelves, are beautiful; that there is an original and eſſential Beauty in ſome particular Forms; and that this quality is as immediately diſcernible in them, as the Forms themſelves.

Philoſophers, however, have not been ſatisfied with this common opinion. The ſuppoſition of ſuch an original and independent Beauty in Forms, has been found inconſiſtent with many phenomena, and ſome more general principle was wanted, under which the different facts upon this ſubject might be tolerably arranged.

Many

Many Theories accordingly have been formed to account for this ſpecies of Beauty. Some have reſolved it into a ſenſe of Proportion, and endeavoured to eſtabliſh, by analogy from our other ſenſes, certain proportions which are immediately and permanently beautiful. Others have accounted for this Beauty from the union of Uniformity and Variety. Some have ſuppoſed it to ariſe from the conſideration of Utility. Others have aſſerted, that the Beauty of Forms ariſes from their Commonneſs, and that the beautiful Form is that which is moſt generally met with in objects of the ſame kind. Mr. Hogarth, in oppoſition to all, conſiders the beautiful Form, as being deſcribed by lines of a particular kind, and has produced a great variety of inſtances in ſupport of his opinion.

It is not my deſign at preſent, to enter into any examination of theſe ſeveral opinions. In all of them, I believe, there is ſomething true to a certain extent, though I believe alſo, that they have ariſen from a partial view of the ſubject, and are inadequate to account for the greater number of the phenomena.

I may be allowed, however, to obſerve, that of the two, the common opinion is by much the moſt defenſible. To reduce the great variety of inſtances of Beauty in Forms to any ſingle principle, ſeems at firſt ſight altogether impoſſible; not only from this variety, but alſo, in innumerable caſes, from the contrary nature of the Forms, which, in fact, are Beautiful. As no Theory beſides, can poſſibly be maintained without

out ſome foundation in Nature, the number of Theories which have been produced upon this ſubject, are, in themſelves an evidence, that this Beauty ariſes from more cauſes than any one of theſe Theories comprehends.

The principle which I have endeavoured to illuſtrate, with regard to the Beauty and Sublimity of Sounds and Colours, will, perhaps, be found to be equally applicable to the Beauty or Sublimity of Forms: and as far as I can judge, is free from the objections which may be ſtated both to the common and the philoſophical opinions. In the obſervations which follow, I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſhew, That the Sublimity or Beauty of Forms ariſes altogether from the Aſſociations we connect with them, or the Qualities of which they are expreſſive to us; and I ſhall endeavour to explain, with as much accuracy as I am able, the different Expreſſions of which Forms are ſuſceptible, and which are the Foundation of that Sublimity and Beauty which we aſcribe to them. The importance of the ſubject, will, I hope, be my excuſe for the length, and perhaps for the tedioufneſs of ſome of theſe illuſtrations.

FORMS are naturally diviſible into two kinds, into animated and inanimate Forms. It is the latter of theſe only which I propoſe at preſent to conſider; as it is obviouſly neceſſary firſt to conſider the ſource of the Beauty of which Form itſelf is capable, before we can properly aſcertain that ſuperior Beauty which ariſes from Animation.

With

With regard to inanimate Forms, the principal expreſſions which they have to us, ſeem to me to be, *1ſt*, The expreſſions of ſuch qualities as ariſe from the nature of the bodies diſtinguiſhed by ſuch Forms; and, *2dly*, The expreſſions of ſuch qualities as ariſe from their being the ſubject or production of Art. The firſt of theſe conſtitutes what may be called their NATURAL Beauty; the ſecond, what may be called their RELATIVE Beauty. There is alſo another ſource of expreſſion in ſuch qualities from accidental Aſſociation, and which perhaps may be termed their ACCIDENTAL Beauty.

Upon each of theſe ſources of the Beauty of Forms, I ſhall offer ſome obſervations.

SEC-

SECTION I.

Of the NATURAL SUBLIMITY *and* BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

PART I.

Of the SUBLIMITY *of* FORMS.

THE Sublimity of inanimate Forms ſeems to ariſe chiefly from two ſources; *1ſt*, From the nature of the objects diſtinguiſhed by that Form; and *2dly*, From the quantity or magnitude of the Form itſelf. There are other circumſtances in the nature of Forms, which may extend or increaſe this character; but I apprehend, that the two now mentioned, are the only ones which of themſelves conſtitute Sublimity. Both of them, I believe, are productive of this effect, by being expreſſive to us of qualities capable of exciting very ſtrong Emotions.

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1. The Forms which diſtinguiſh bodies that are connected in our minds with ideas of Danger or Power, are in general Sublime. There is ſcarcely any thing in inanimate Nature more remarkably ſo, than all thoſe Forms which are appropriated to the inſtruments of War. The Forms of Cannon, Mortars, &c. have all a character of this kind. Military Enſigns, although approaching to very common and neglected Forms, partake of the ſame character: there are few things more Sublime than the Forms of Armour, particularly the ſteel Armour which was in uſe in the middle ages. Even the familiarity of common uſe does not altogether deſtroy this effect; the Sword, the Spear, the Javelin, the Dagger, are ſtill ſublime Forms, and enter with propriety into the ſublimeſt deſcriptions either of Poetry or Painting.

2. The Forms that in general diſtinguiſh bodies of great duration, and which of conſequence expreſs to us great Power or Strength, are in moſt caſes Sublime. In the Vegetable Kingdom, the Forms of Trees are Sublime, principally in proportion to their expreſſion of this quality. Nothing is more Sublime than the Form of Rocks, which ſeem to be coeval with Creation, and which all the convulſions of Nature have not been able to deſtroy. The Sublimeſt of all the Mechanical Arts is Architecture, principally from the durableneſs of its pro-

productions; and theſe productions are in themſelves Sublime, in proportion to their Antiquity, or the extent of their Duration. The Gothic Caſtle is ſtill more ſublime than all, becauſe, beſides the deſolation of Time, it ſeems alſo to have withſtood the aſſaults of War.

3. The Forms which diſtinguiſh bodies that are connected in our Minds with ideas of Splendor or Magnificence, are in general ſublime. The Forms of the Throne, the Sceptre, and the Diadem, approach, in fact, to very common and very neglected Forms, yet they are all ſublime, from being the Signs of the Splendor and Magnificence of Royalty. The triumphal Car, and the triumphal Arch, are ſublime Forms from ſimilar Aſſociations.

4. The Forms, in the ſame manner, which diſtinguiſh bodies connected in our Minds with ideas of Awe or Solemnity, are in general ſublime. The Forms of Temples, although very different as Forms, have in all ages been accounted as ſublime. Even the moſt common Forms employed in religious ſervice, derive a character of this kind from the qualities with which they are connected. The Thunderbolt of Jupiter, the Trident of Neptune, &c. ſeem to have been conſidered by the Ancients as ſublime Forms, although in themſelves they are inſignificant. The Forms of all thoſe things, in the ſame manner, which are employed in the burial of the Dead, are ſtrikingly ſublime. The Pall, the Hearſe, the Robes of Mourners,

ers, &c. even the Plumes, which in general are ſo beautiful, and the Colour of which is in moſt caſes ſo cheerful, are, in this ſituation, above all other things, powerfully Sublime.

That theſe, and probably other Aſſociations of a ſimilar kind, have an effect in beſtowing Sublimity upon the Forms which generally diſtinguiſh ſuch bodies, every perſon, I think, will be ſatisfied, both from his own experience, and from converſation. That the Sublimity of ſuch Forms ariſes from the qualities which they expreſs, and not from an original fitneſs in any peculiar Forms to produce this Emotion, is ſo apparent from the ſingle conſideration of the great variety of Forms that are ſublime, that I will not fatigue the reader by any farther illuſtration of it.

II.

The Sublimity of Forms, in many caſes alſo, ariſes from their Magnitude; and this Quality alone is often ſufficient to beſtow Sublimity. With Magnitude accordingly, we have many diſtinct and powerful Aſſociations.

In animal Forms, Magnitude is ſtrongly aſſociated in our Minds with the idea of proportionable Power or Strength, and is chiefly ſublime from its expreſſion of this Quality. Animals of great ſize, but feeble or harmleſs, are

ſo far from being ſublime, that they are in general contemptible; a fact which may eaſily be obſerved even in the opinions of Children.

In inanimate Forms, Magnitude ſeems to have different expreſſions to us, according to its different appearance or deſcription.

Magnitude in Height, is expreſſive to us of Elevation, and Magnanimity. The ſource of this Aſſociation is ſo obvious, and the Aſſociation itſelf ſo natural, that ſuch qualities of Mind have, in all ages, been expreſſed by theſe Images, and ſuch Magnitudes deſcribed by terms drawn from theſe qualities of Mind.

Magnitude in Depth, is expreſſive to us of Danger or Terror, and from our conſtant experience, of images of Horror. In all countries, the popular Hell is conſidered as an unfathomable abyſs into which the ſouls of the wicked are plunged.

Magnitude in Length, is expreſſive to us of Vaſtneſs, and when apparently unbounded, of Infinity; that being naturally imagined to be without end, to which we can diſcern none. It is impoſſible to ſee a vaſt plain, and above all, the ocean, without this impreſſion. In ſpite of the knowledge we have of the immenſe ſpace between us and the fixed ſtars, and of the comparatively trifling diſtance between any two points in this globe, yet the former is not nearly ſo ſublime as the view of the

the ocean without ſhore, or even of a great plain without bounds.

Magnitude in Breadth, is expreſſive to us of Stability, of Duration, of Superiority to Deſtruction. Towers, Forts, Caſtles, &c. are ſublime in conſequence of this aſſociation, though very often they have no other conſiderable magnitude. The pyramids of Egypt are ſtrikingly ſublime in point of form, from this Expreſſion, as well as from the real knowledge we have of their duration. We are ſo accuſtomed to judge of the ſtability of every thing by the proportion of its baſe, that terms borrowed from this material quality, are in every language appropriated to the expreſſion of ſome of the ſublimeſt conceptions we can form; to the ſtability of Nations, of Empires, of the Laws of Nature, of the future hopes of good men.

For the reality of theſe Aſſociations, I might appeal to every man's own experience, as well as to the common language of mankind. That it is from ſuch Expreſſions, or from being the ſign of ſuch qualities that Magnitude is ſublime, and not from any original fitneſs in the quality itſelf to produce this Emotion, ſeems to me obvious from the following conſiderations: 1*ſt*, That there is no determinate Magnitude, which is ſolely or peculiarly ſublime, as would neceſſarily be the caſe, were Magnitude itſelf the cauſe of this Emotion. 2*dly*, That the ſame viſible Magnitude which is ſublime in

one ſubject, is often very far from being ſublime in another, and *vice verſa*; and 3*dly*, That Magnitude, according to its different appearances, has different characters of Sublimity correſponding to the different Expreſſions which ſuch appearances have; whereas if it were in itſelf ſublime, independently of all Expreſſion, it would in all caſes have the ſame degree, and the ſame character of Sublimity.

PART

PART II.

Of the NATURAL BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

The moſt obvious definition of FORM is that of Matter, bounded or circumſcribed by Lines. As no ſtraight line, however, can include Matter, it follows, that the only Lines which can conſtitute Form, muſt be either, *1ſt*, Angular Lines, or, *2dly*, Curved or winding Lines. Every Form whatever muſt be compoſed either by one or other of theſe Lines, or by the Union of them.

When Forms are compoſed by one of theſe lines ſolely, they may be termed SIMPLE Forms. When they are compoſed by the Union of them, they may be termed COMPLEX Forms.

For the ſake of perſpicuity, I ſhall firſt conſider what it is that conſtitutes the Beauty of Simple Forms, and then, what conſtitutes the Beauty of Complex Forms.

Simple Forms then may be conſidered as deſcribed either by angular, or by winding Lines. Theſe different Forms ſeem to me to be connected in our minds with very different Aſſociati-

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ons, or to be expreſſive to us of very different Qualities. I ſhall beg leave to mention ſome of theſe, without pretending to a complete enumeration.

1. The greater part of thoſe bodies in Nature, which poſſeſs Hardneſs, Strength, or Durability, are diſtinguiſhed by angular Forms. The greater part of thoſe bodies, on the contrary, which poſſeſs Weakneſs, Fragility or Delicacy, are diſtinguiſhed by winding or curvilinear Forms. In the Mineral Kingdom, all Rocks, Stones, and Metals, the hardeſt and moſt durable bodies we know, aſſume univerſally angular Forms. In the Vegetable Kingdom, all ſtrong and durable Plants, are in general diſtinguiſhed by ſimilar Forms. The feebler and more delicate race of Vegetables, on the contrary, are moſtly diſtinguiſhed by winding Forms. In the Animal Kingdom, in the ſame manner, ſtrong and powerful Animals, are generally characteriſed by Angular Forms: feeble and delicate Animals by Forms of the contrary kind. In conſequence of this very general connection in Nature, theſe different Forms become expreſſive to us of the different qualities of Strength and Delicacy.

2. In all thoſe bodies which have a progreſs, or which grow and decay within our own obſervation, the ſame character of Form is obſervable. In the Vegetable Kingdom, the infancy or youth of plants is, in general, diſtinguiſhed by winding Forms. The infancy and youth of animals is, in the ſame manner, diſtinguiſhed by winding or ſerpentine Forms. Their

Their mature and perfect age, by Forms more direct and angular. In conſequence of this connection, Forms of the firſt kind become in ſuch caſes expreſſive to us of Infancy, and Tenderneſs, and Delicacy, and thoſe of the ſecond kind of Maturity, and Strength and Vigour.

3. Beſides theſe very obvious Aſſociations, it is alſo to be obſerved, that from the Senſe of Touch, angular Forms are expreſſive to us of Roughneſs, Sharpneſs, Harſhneſs; winding Forms, on the contrary, of Softneſs, Smoothneſs, Delicacy, and Fineneſs, and this connection is ſo permanent, that we immediately infer the exiſtence of theſe qualities, when the bodies are only perceived by the Eye. There is a very ſtrong analogy between ſuch qualities as are perceived by the Senſe of Touch, and certain qualities of mind; as in all languages ſuch qualities are expreſſed by terms drawn from the perceptions of the external ſenſe. Such Forms, therefore, when preſented to the Eye, not only lead us to infer thoſe material qualities which are perceived by the ſenſe of touch, but along with theſe, to infer alſo thoſe qualities of mind, which from analogy are ſignified by ſuch qualities of matter, and to feel from them ſome degree of that Emotion which theſe diſpoſitions of mind themſelves are fitted to produce. The epithets Bold, Harſh, Gentle, Delicate, are univerſally applied to Forms. In all languages figurative expreſſions of a ſimilar kind will be found; and whoever attends either to his own feelings, or to the meaning which men in general annex to ſuch words in applying them to Forms, will, I believe, be convinced, that the Emotion which they ſignify,

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and are intended to ſignify, is founded upon the aſſociated qualities, and very different from the mere agreeable or diſagreeable ſenſation which the material qualities alone convey.

4. The obſervations which I have now made, relate principally to ſimple curves, or to Forms in which a ſingle curvature takes place; as the curve of the Weeping Willow, of the young ſhoots of Trees, of the ſtem of the Tulip, and the Lily of the Valley. There is another ſpecies of Form, commonly diſtinguiſhed by the name of the winding or ſerpentine Form, in which different Curves take place, or in which a continued Line winds into ſeveral Curvatures. With this Form, I apprehend we have another, and a very important Aſſociation, I mean that of Eaſe. From what cauſe this aſſociation ariſes, I will not now ſtop to enquire; but I conceive every one muſt have obſerved, that wherever we find Vegetables, or any other delicate or attenuated body aſſume ſuch Forms, we are impreſſed with the conviction of its being eaſy, agreeable to their nature, and free from force or conſtraint. On the contrary, when ſuch bodies, in the line of their progreſs, aſſume angular Forms, we have a ſtrong impreſſion of the operation of force, of ſomething that either prevents them from their natural direction, or that conſtrains them to aſſume an unnatural one. That winding Forms are thus expreſſive to us of Volition and Eaſe, and angular Forms of the operation of Force or Conſtraint, appears from a ſingular circumſtance in Language, viz. That, in general, all the former directions are expreſſed by verbs in the active

active voice; a River winds, a Vine wreathes itself about the Elm, a Flower bends, *&c.* while, on the other hand, all directions of the latter kind are expreſſed in general by the paſſive voice of verbs. I believe alſo, I may appeal to the obſervation of the reader, whether from the winding of a River, of the Ivy, or of the tendrils of the Vine, he has not an impreſſion of Eaſe, of Freedom, of ſomething agreeable to the object: and whether, in the contrary Forms in ſuch caſes, he has not an impreſſion of uneaſineſs, from the conviction of Force having been applied, or ſome obſtacle having occurred, to conſtrain them to aſſume a direction unnatural to them. In general, therefore, I apprehend, that winding or ſerpentine Forms are expreſſive to us of Eaſe, and angular Forms of Force or Conſtraint. Such ſeem to me the principal Aſſociations we have with the great diviſion of Simple Forms. Winding Forms being expreſſive to us of Fineneſs, Delicacy, Eaſe; and angular Forms of Strength, Roughneſs, and in ſome caſes of the operation of Force or Conſtraint.

All Forms as perceived by the Eye, are conſtituted by Lines; and their Beauty is dependent upon the nature of theſe conſtituent parts. It is natural, therefore, to enquire, whether from ſuch Aſſociations, any general principles can be formed, which may direct the Artiſt in the invention of beautiful Forms, by determining the character and expreſſion of Lines.

Lines

Lines differ either in regard to their Nature, or their Direction.

1. Lines differ in regard to their nature according to the different degrees of their Conſiſtence or Strength. Strong and vigorous lines are expreſſive to us of Strength and Stability when perpendicular; and of ſome degree of harſhneſs or roughneſs when horizontal, or in an oblique direction. Fine and faint Lines are expreſſive to us of Smoothneſs, Fineneſs, Delicacy. In any given number of ſtraight Lines, that is always moſt beautiful which is fineſt, or which while it preſerves its continuity, has the appearance of the ſmalleſt quantity of matter employed in the formation of it. Hence, in every ſubject either of Art or Nature, one of the principal cauſes of the Beauty of delicate outline.

2. Lines differ in their direction in two ways. They are either Even or Uneven, that is, Straight or Irregular. Irregular Lines differ again, they are either in Angles or Curves.

1. Even Lines are expreſſive to us of Softneſs and Smoothneſs.

2. Uneven Lines are either Angular or Winding.

Angular Lines are expreſſive of Harſhneſs, Roughneſs, *&c.*

Winding

Winding Lines of Pliancy, Delicacy, Eaſe, *&c.*

The real and actual Beauty of Lines will be found to correſpond to theſe Aſſociations; and theſe are in fact the moſt beautiful which have the moſt pleaſing or affecting Expreſſion.

1. Strong and Even Lines expreſs Strength and Smoothneſs. They have therefore a degree of Beauty. Fine and Even Lines expreſs Delicacy and Smoothneſs. They are accordingly more beautiful than the former.

2. Strong and Angular Lines expreſs Strength and Harſhneſs. They are therefore very ſeldom beautiful. Fine and Angular Lines expreſs Delicacy together with Roughneſs. They are beautiful therefore only, when the expreſſion of Delicacy prevails over the other.

3. Strong and Winding Lines expreſs Strength and Gentleneſs or Delicacy. Their effect is mutually deſtroyed, and they are accordingly indifferent, if not unpleaſing. Fine and Winding Lines expreſs Delicacy and Eaſe. They are accordingly peculiarly beautiful.

4. The leaſt beautiful Lines are Strong and Angular Lines. The moſt Beautiful, Fine and Winding Lines.

Conſidering therefore Lines in this abſtracted view, and independent of the nature of the bodies which they diſtinguiſh, it ſeems very natural to

to conclude, That theſe Forms will be the moſt beautiful which are deſcribed by the moſt beautiful Lines, and that of conſequence, the Serpentine or winding Form muſt neceſſarily be the moſt beautiful. It was this view of the ſubject which ſeems to have influenced Mr. HOGARTH, in the opinions which he publiſhed in his ANALYSIS of BEAUTY. He ſaw clearly, and his art afforded him continual proofs of it, that the Winding Line was of all others the moſt beautiful. He conceived therefore, that all Forms muſt be beautiful in proportion to the predominance of this Line in their Compoſition; and his opinion falls in ſo much with the general obſervation of Mankind, that it has been univerſally adopted.

If, however, the obſervations which I have made upon the different expreſſions of Forms are juſt; if the Winding or Serpentine Form is beautiful, not of itſelf, and originally, but in conſequence of the Aſſociations we connect with it, it ought to follow, that whenever this Aſſociation is deſtroyed, the Form ſhould be no longer beautiful, and that wherever the ſame Aſſociations are connected with the contrary Form, that Form ſhould then be felt as Beautiful.

That this is actually the caſe, I ſhall now endeavour to ſhew from ſeveral very familiar Illuſtrations.

1. If ſuch Forms were in themſelves Beautiful, it is reaſonable to think that this ſhould be expreſſed in Language, and that the circumſtance of the Form ſhould be aſſigned as the cauſe of our Emotion.

Emotion. If, on the contrary, ſuch Forms are beautiful from their being expreſſive of particular Qualities, it is equally reaſonable to think, that, in common language, this expreſſion ſhould be aſſigned as the cauſe of the Emotion. That the latter is the caſe, cannot, I think, well be diſputed. No Man, when he is ſpeaking of the Beauty of any Form, unleſs he has ſome Theory in his Mind, thinks of aſcribing it to the peculiar nature of the Form, or of deſcribing its Beauty to other People, as conſiſting in this Form. The terms, on the contrary, which are generally uſed upon theſe occaſions, are ſuch as ſignify ſome quality of which the Form is expreſſive; and the epithets by which the Beauty of the Form is marked, are ſuch as are ſignificant of theſe Qualities. Among theſe Qualities, thoſe of Gentleneſs, Fineneſs or Delicacy, as far as I can judge, are the moſt remarkable, and the moſt generally expreſſed in common Language. In deſcribing the beautiful Forms of Ground, we ſpeak of gentle Declivities, and gentle Swells. In deſcribing the beautiful Forms of Water, we ſpeak of a mild Current, gentle Falls, ſoft Windings, a tranquil Stream. In deſcribing the beautiful Forms of the Vegetable Kingdom, we uſe a ſimilar Language. The delicacy of Flowers, of Foliage, of the young Shoots of Trees and Shrubs, are expreſſions every where to be heard, and which every where convey the belief of Beauty in theſe Forms. In the ſame manner, in thoſe ornamental Forms, which are the production of Art, we employ the ſame Language to expreſs our opinion of their Beauty. The delicacy of a Wreath, of a Feſtoon, of Drapery, of

a Co-

a Column, or of a Vaſe, are terms univerſally employed, and employed to ſignify the reaſon of our admiration of their Forms.

It may be obſerved alſo, that in comparing ſimilar Forms, and determining with regard to their Beauty, we employ the ſame language; and that the reaſon we aſſign for our preference of one Form to another, is, in general, from its ſuperior expreſſion of Fineneſs or Delicacy. In comparing two Vaſes, or two Wreaths, or two Feſtoons, or any other ornamental Forms, a Perſon unacquainted with the Theories of Philoſophers, when he is aſked the reaſon of his preference, very readily anſwers, becauſe it is more delicate; but never thinks of aſſigning any circumſtance of the Form itſelf, as the foundation of his admiration. The leaſt attention to the common language of mankind on ſuch ſubjects, will ſufficiently ſhew how much the expreſſion of delicacy determines the Beauty of all ornamental Forms. In deſcribing any beautiful Form, in the ſame manner, to other people, we uſually employ the ſame language, and this language is not only perfectly underſtood, but immediately alſo conveys to others the conception of the Beauty of this Form. If we were to deſcribe the moſt beautiful Vaſe in technical terms, and according to the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of its Form, no one but an Artiſt would have any tolerable conception of its Beauty; but if we were ſimply to deſcribe it, as peculiarly delicate in all its parts, I believe it would leave with every one the impreſſion of the Beauty of its Form. If however, there were any original and

independent

independent Beauty in particular Forms, the deſcription of this Form would be alone ſufficient to convey the idea of its Beauty, and the circumſtance of its Delicacy or Fineneſs would be as little able to convey this idea, as that of its Colour.

I ſhall only farther obſerve upon this ſubject, that the language and opinions of Children, and of common People, are inconſiſtent with the notion of any original or abſolute Beauty in any particular Forms. Every Form is beautiful to Children that diſtinguiſhes objects, which they love or take pleaſure in; and ſo far are they, or the common People from having any conception of the abſtract Beauty of any peculiar Forms, that it is very ſeldom they diſtinguiſh between the Form and the ſubject formed, or feel any other Emotion from it, than as it is expreſſive to them of the qualities of the object diſtinguiſhed by that Form. If, on the contrary, there were any original and independent Beauty in any peculiar Form, the preference of this Form would be early and decidedly marked both in the language of Children, and in the opinions of Mankind.

As there appears therefore, to be no Form which is peculiarly or ſolely beautiful, and as in winding or curvilinear Forms, the general nature of Language ſeems to aſcribe this Beauty to their expreſſion of Delicacy, and not to the mere circumſtance of Form itſelf, it appears probable, that the Beauty of ſuch Forms ariſes from this expreſſion, and not from any original fitneſs in ſuch Forms to excite this Emotion.

2. When

2. When this Aſſociation is deſtroyed, or when winding or curvilinear Forms ceaſe to be expreſſive of Tenderneſs or Delicacy, I believe it will be found, that they ceaſe alſo to be felt as beautiful. The origin of our Aſſociation of Delicacy with ſuch Forms, ariſes, as I have before obſerved, from our general experience that bodies of ſuch a kind are diſtinguiſhed by ſuch Forms. This Aſſociation therefore will be deſtroyed, when ſuch Forms are given to, or aſſumed by bodies of a contrary kind.

The greater part of beautiful Forms in Nature, are to be found in the Vegetable Kingdom, in the Forms of Flowers, of Foliage, of Shrubs, and in thoſe aſſumed by the young Shoots of Trees. It is from them accordingly, that almoſt all thoſe Forms have been imitated, which have been employed by Artiſts for the purpoſes of Ornament and Elegance: and whoever will take the trouble of reviewing theſe different ornamental Forms, will find that they are almoſt invariably the Forms of ſuch Vegetables, or of ſuch parts of Vegetables, as are diſtinguiſhed by the Delicacy and Tenderneſs of their Texture.

There are many parts however, of the Vegetable Kingdom, which are not diſtinguiſhed by this character of Delicacy. The ſtem of ſome ſpecies of Flowers, and of almoſt all Shrubs, the trunk and branches of Trees, are diſtinguiſhed by oppoſite characters, and would indeed be unfit for the purpoſes of Vegetation if they were not. In theſe ſubjects accordingly, the winding or ſerpentine Form is very far from being beautiful,

ful, as it has no longer its uſual expreſſion of Fineneſs or Delicacy.

In the ſmaller and feebler tribe of flowers, for inſtance, as in the Violet, the Daiſy, or the Lily of the Valley, the bending of the ſtem conſtitutes a very beautiful Form, becauſe we immediately perceive that it is the conſequence of the weakneſs and delicacy of the flower. In the Roſe, on the contrary, and the white Lily, and in the tribe of flowering ſhrubs, a claſs of vegetables of greater ſtrength, the ſame Form aſſumed by the ſtem is felt as a defect, and inſtead of impreſſing us with the idea of Delicacy, leads us to believe the operation of ſome force to twiſt it into this direction. In the young and feeble branches of ſuch plants, however, this Form is again beautiful, when we perceive that it is the conſequence of the delicacy of their texture, and of their being overpowered by the weight of the flower. In the Vine or Ivy, in the ſame manner, the winding of the young ſhoots and feebler branches, conſtitutes very beautiful Forms. In the direction of the ſtem, on the other hand, ſuch Forms are felt as a defect, as no longer expreſſive of Delicacy, but of Force. In the growth of the ſtronger vegetables, as of Trees, where we know and expect great ſtrength, nothing can be ſo far from being beautiful, as any winding or ſerpentine Form aſſumed by the trunk. The beautiful Form of ſuch objects is of ſo very different a kind, that it is in the oppoſite Form only that we perceive it. In the direction of the branches, the ſame character is expected, and a ſimilar defect would be felt in their aſſuming any regularly

winding or curvilinear Form. It is only when we arrive at the young ſhoots, and that only in their infant ſeaſon, in ſpring, that we diſcover again the ſerpentine Form to be beautiful, becauſe it is then only that we perceive it to be really expreſſive of Tenderneſs or Delicacy. Obſervations of this kind are within every perſon's reach, and I believe it will be found, that in the Vegetable Kingdom, the winding or ſerpentine Form is no longer beautiful than while it is expreſſive of ſome degree of Delicacy or Fineneſs, and that it ceaſes to be beautiful, whenever it is aſſumed by bodies of a different kind.

All the different bodies which conſtitute the Mineral Kingdom, are diſtinguiſhed by a greater degree of Hardneſs and Solidity, than is to be found in any other of the productions of Nature. Such bodies, however, by different exertions of Art, may be moulded into any form we pleaſe; but the beauty of the ſerpentine Form, in ſuch caſes, is loſt, from our conſciouſneſs of the abſence of that Delicacy which in general accompanies ſuch Forms. It is poſſible, for inſtance, to imitate the winding of the Ivy, the tendrils of the Vine, or the beautiful curves of the Roſe Tree, in Iron, or in any other metal. It is poſſible alſo, to colour ſuch imitations in ſo perfect a manner, as at firſt to deceive the ſpectator. If I am not miſtaken, however, the moment we are undeceived, the moment we know that the ſubject is ſo different from that which characteriſes ſuch Forms in real Nature, the Beauty of the Forms is deſtroyed, and inſtead of that pleaſing ſentiment of Tenderneſs which the delicacy of the

the vegetables excites, a ſentiment of diſappointment and uneaſineſs ſucceeds: of diſappointment, from the abſence of that delicacy which we generally infer from the appearance of ſuch Forms; and of uneaſineſs, from the conviction of Force having been applied to twiſt the ſubject into ſo unnatural directions. If the ſame obſervation is further purſued, I think, it will be found in general, that wherever the delicate Forms of the vegetable world, are imitated in metal, or any other hard or durable ſubſtance, the character of the Form is loſt, and that inſtead of that lively Emotion of Beauty, which we receive from the original Forms, we are conſcious of a feeling of diſcontent, from the ſeeming impropriety of giving to ſuch durable ſubſtances a character which does not belong to them.

There are, however, undoubtedly, caſes in which curvilinear Forms in ſuch ſubjects are beautiful. I apprehend, however, that this takes place only when a kind of adventitious delicacy is given to ſuch ſubſtances, and of conſequence the ſame character is retained by the Form which we have generally aſſociated with it in real Nature. This effect is in general produced by the following cauſes: 1*ſt*, When the quantity of matter is ſo ſmall, as to overcome our ſenſe of its ſtrength or durability; and, 2*dly*, When the workmanſhip is ſo excellent, as to produce an opinion of fineneſs or delicacy, independent of the nature of the ſubject upon which it is employed. In either of theſe caſes, ſuch Forms may be beautiful, though aſſum-

ed by the hardeſt or moſt durable ſubſtances.

A Bar of Iron, for inſtance, or of any other metal, may be twiſted by force into the moſt perfect ſpiral Form; but in ſuch a caſe, the conviction of force and labour deſtroys altogether the beauty of the general Form. Suppoſe this bar lengthened, until it becomes as ſlender as the wires which are made uſe of in muſical inſtruments, and as delicate as ſuch wires are, and the Form becomes immediately beautiful. The ſame bar may be bent by force into the Form of any given curve. In ſuch a caſe the curve is not beautiful. Make the ſame experiment with a chain of iron, or of any other metal, which in ſome reſpects is yielding and pliant, and where we know that no force is requiſite to make it aſſume ſuch Forms, and the curves which it produces will be found very different in point of Beauty. The imitation of any vegetable Form, in the ſame manner, as the Vine, or the Roſe, in any kind of metal, and as large as it is found in nature, would be very far from being beautiful. The imitation of ſuch Forms in Miniature, and in Relief, when the character of the ſubſtance is in ſome meaſure forgot in the diminution of its quantity, may be, and very often is, extremely beautiful. The embelliſhments of a Vaſe, or of an Urn, which in general conſiſt in the imitation of vegetable Forms, are beautiful both from the diminution of their ſize, and from the delicacy of their workmanſhip. If either of theſe circumſtances were wanting, if they were maſſy in their ſubſtance, or imperfect

imperfect in their execution, I apprehend, a proportionable degree of their Beauty would be loſt. In the ſame manner, although none of the Forms of the greater vegetables are beautiful, when imitated in their full ſize, many of the ſmaller and more delicate plants may be imitated with propriety, becauſe ſuch imitations ſuppoſe not only ſmall quantities of matter, but great accuracy and perfection of art.

The ſame obſervation may be extended to the ornaments of Architecture. Theſe ornaments being executed in a very hard and durable ſubſtance, are in fact only beautiful when they appear but as minute parts of the whole. The great conſtituent parts of every building require direct and angular lines, becauſe in ſuch parts we require the Expreſſion of Stability and Strength. It is only in the minute and delicate parts of the work, that any kind of ornament is attempted with propriety; and whenever ſuch ornaments exceed in ſize, in their quantity of matter, or in the prominence of their Relief, that proportion which in point of lightneſs or delicacy we expect them to hold with reſpect to the whole of the building, the imitation of the moſt beautiful vegetable Forms, does not preſerve them from the cenſure of Clumſineſs and Deformity. A balluſtrade might with equal propriety be finiſhed in waving lines, but certainly would not be beautiful. A twiſted column, though affording very pleaſing curves to the Eye, is acknowledged to be leſs beautiful than the common and regular one. In ſhort, if the ſerpentine Form were the only Form of Beauty,

ty, it might with ſufficient propriety be introduced into a great number of the ornamental parts of Architecture. The fact of which every perſon may aſſure himſelf, that ſuch Forms are beautiful only in thoſe parts where the quantity of matter is minute, the Relief ſmall, and the workmanſhip more exquiſite, affords a ſtrong preſumption, that ſuch Forms ceaſe to be beautiful, when the general Aſſociation we have with them is deſtroyed.

It is the ſame limit which ſeems to determine the Beauty of thoſe Forms which are executed either in wood or plaſter, for the ornament of our houſes. Every perſon muſt have obſerved in old houſes, the abſolute deformity of thoſe figures with which the roofs were decorated, and in comparing them with thoſe of modern times, will perceive, that the great ſuperiority of the latter conſiſts in the greater delicacy of the Forms, as well as in the greater perfection of the execution. In both, flowers and foliage are imitated; but in the one in full Relief, and upon a ſcale ſometimes greater than that of Nature. In the other, with the ſimpleſt Relief, and the fineſt lines, that are conſiſtent with the preparation of the ſubject. The terms, accordingly, by which we expreſs our contempt or our admiration of them, are thoſe of Heavineſs or Lightneſs, terms which in this ſubject are ſynonimous with Maſſineſs or Delicacy. The ſubjects, however, are the ſame, and no other circumſtances intervene, but the ſuperior delicacy of the Forms, and the greater accuracy of the workmanſhip.

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It would lead me into too long a digreſſion, if I were to enter into any detail on theſe ſubjects. The hints which I have offered, may perhaps lead the reader to ſatisfy himſelf by his own obſervation; that the winding or curvilinear Form is beautiful only in thoſe ſubjects which are diſtinguiſhed by ſoftneſs or delicacy of texture: that in ſubſtances of a hard and durable nature, it in general ceaſes to be beautiful; and that in thoſe caſes where it is found to be beautiful, it ariſes from that adventitious delicacy (if I may ſo call it) which is produced, either when the quantity of matter employed is ſo ſmall as to overcome our opinion of its ſtrength or durability, or when the workmanſhip is ſo excellent, as to beſtow on the ſubject a character of Delicacy which does not properly belong to it. If in this manner, it is found, that when the Aſſociation is deſtroyed, the curvilinear Form ceaſes to be beautiful, it is obvious, that this Beauty is to be aſcribed, not to the Form itſelf, but to the quality of which it is expreſſive.

3. As the Beauty of the winding or curvilinear Form is thus deſtroyed, when thoſe Aſſociations of Tenderneſs, and of Delicacy, which we in general connect with it, are diſſolved, ſo, in the ſame manner, it may be obſerved, that all other Forms, when they have this character or expreſſion, are conſidered and felt as beautiful. If there is any Form, or ſpecies of Forms, which is fitted by the conſtitution of our nature immediately to excite the Emotion of Beauty, and independent of all Aſſociation, it is obvious,

ous, that there never could have been a doubt upon the ſubject, and that in every claſs of objects, we ſhould have been as able to point out the beautiful Form, as to point out its Colour or Smell. The fact is, however, that in no claſs of objects is there any ſuch permanent Form of Beauty; and beſides, the diſagreement of different ages and nations in the Beauty of Forms, every man muſt have perceived in the courſe of his experience, that every general rule on this ſubject is liable to innumerable exceptions, and that there is no one Form, or ſpecies of Form, which, to the excluſion of all others, demands and obtains his admiration.

That angular Forms, accordingly, are alſo beautiful, when they are expreſſive of Fineneſs, of Tenderneſs, of Delicacy, or ſuch affecting qualities, may perhaps appear from the conſideration of the following inſtances.

In the Vegetable World, although it is generally true, that winding Forms are thoſe that are aſſumed by young, or feeble, or delicate plants, yet this rule is far from being uniform, and there are many inſtances of ſimilar productions being diſtinguiſhed by Forms of an angular kind. There are accordingly many caſes, where this Form is conſidered as beautiful, becauſe it is then expreſſive of the ſame qualities which are generally expreſſed by Forms of the other kind. The Myrtle, for inſtance, is generally reckoned a beautiful Form, yet the growth of its ſtem is perpendicular, the junction of its branches form regular and ſimilar angles, and their direction is in

in ſtraight or angular Lines. The known delicacy, however, and tenderneſs of the Vegetable, at leaſt in this climate, prevails over the general expreſſion of the Form, and gives it the ſame Beauty which we generally find in Forms of a contrary kind. How much more beautiful is the Roſe Tree when its buds begin to blow, than afterwards when its flowers are full and in their greateſt perfection: yet in this firſt ſituation, its Form has much leſs winding ſurface, and is much more compoſed of ſtraight lines and of angles, than afterwards, when the weight of the flower weighs down the feeble branches, and deſcribes the eaſieſt and moſt varied curves. The circumſtance of its youth, a circumſtance in all caſes ſo affecting; the delicacy of its bloſſom, ſo well expreſſed by the care which nature has taken in ſurrounding the opening bud with leaves, prevail ſo much upon our Imagination, that we behold the Form itſelf with more delight in this ſituation, than afterwards, when it aſſumes the more general Form of delicacy. It is on a ſimilar account that the leaves of Vegetables form a very common, and a very beautiful Decoration, though they are leſs diſtinguiſhed by winding Lines, than almoſt any other part of the plants. There are an infinite number of the feebler Vegetables, and many of the common graſſes, the Forms of which are altogether diſtinguiſhed by Angles and ſtraight Lines, and where there is not a ſingle Curvature through the whole, yet all of which are beautiful, and of which alſo ſome are imitated in different ornamental Forms with excellent effect, merely from the Fineneſs and Delicacy of their Texture,

ture, which is ſo very ſtriking that they never fail when we attend to them, to afford us that ſentiment of intereſt and tenderneſs, which in general we receive from the oppoſite Form. There are few things in the Vegetable World more beautiful than the knotted and angular ſtem of the Balſam; merely from its ſingular tranſparency, which it is impoſſible to look at, without a ſtrong impreſſion of the Fineneſs and Delicacy of the Vegetable. Such obſervations with regard to Flowers or Plants, every perſon has it in his power to purſue. There is not, perhaps, any individual of this Kingdom, which if it is remarkable for its Delicacy or Tenderneſs, is not alſo conſidered as beautiful in its Form, whether that Form be winding or angular.

It deſerves alſo to be remarked, that the Form of the great conſtituent parts of all Vegetables, whether ſtrong or delicate, is nearly the ſame; the growth of the ſtem and the direction of the branches being in both alike, and in both alſo, either in ſtraight or in angular Lines. It is principally in the more delicate parts of the firſt, in the young Shoots, and in the Foliage, that they deviate from this Form, and aſſume winding or curvilinear directions. It is in theſe parts only, as I have before obſerved, that we diſcover beautiful Forms. In the claſs of feeble or delicate Plants, on the contrary, the Forms which we neglect in the firſt, are regarded as beautiful, becauſe they have that expreſſion which is found only in the oppoſite Forms of the other. The ſame Form has thus a different effect

ſect from the difference of its expreſſion; and the ſtraight Lines and angular Junctions, which are merely indifferent in the Elm and the Oak, are beheld with delight in the Plant or the Flower, when we are convinced that they are accompanied with Tenderneſs and Delicacy.

In many of thoſe Arts, where the Beauty of Form is chiefly conſulted, the ſame circumſtance is obſervable. In all of them, the Beauty of Form is principally determined by its expreſſion of Delicacy: but as in many of them the curvilinear Form is neceſſarily leſs expreſſive of this quality than the angular one, it is accordingly leſs beautiful.

In the manufacture of Glaſs, for inſtance, the great Beauty of the Form is in proportion to this Expreſſion. Nothing is leſs beautiful than thick and maſſy Glaſs, which, from its quantity, ſeems intended to compenſate for its Fragility. Nothing, on the contrary, is more generally beautiful, than thin and tranſparent Glaſs, which, from experience, we know to be the moſt deciſive ſign of its Delicacy and Weakneſs. In ſuch a manufacture, winding Lines cannot be obſerved without neceſſarily increaſing the quantity and thickneſs of the material, and of conſequence diminiſhing its Fineneſs and Tranſparency. Such Forms accordingly are leſs beautiful than thoſe compoſed of more direct and angular Lines, which, while they admit of greater tranſparency, expreſs alſo greater delicacy and fineneſs. To take a very common inſtance, the ſtalk of a wine Glaſs might with equal eaſe be faſhioned

faſhioned into ſerpentine or winding Forms, as into the angular apartments in which we generally find it, yet I am much deceived if it would be nearly as beautiful, becauſe theſe Lines could not admit of that apparent fineneſs of ſurface, or tranſparency of matter, which is obtained by its angular Diviſions. In a Luſtre, in the ſame manner, one of the moſt beautiful productions of this manufacture, all is angular. The Form of the Priſm, one of the moſt regular and angular of all Forms, obtains every where, the Feſtoons even are angular, and inſtead of any winding or waving Line, the whole ſurface is broken into a thouſand little Triangles; yet I conceive no perſon will deny its Beauty. A Luſtre, on the other hand, compoſed of the moſt beautiful Curves, and ſtudiouſly varied into the moſt waving ſurface, would not be nearly ſo beautiful; becauſe the neceſſary thickneſs which it would give to the Glaſs, would, in this caſe, be expreſſive of Strength and of Solidity, inſtead of Delicacy, and would diminiſh altogether that fine Tranſparency, which in this manufacture, is immediately the ſign of Tenderneſs and Fragility.

The ſame obſervation will apply to the manufacture of Steel, or any other of the Metals. The greateſt expreſſion of Delicacy which a hard ſubſtance like Steel can receive, is from the Fineneſs and Brilliancy of its ſurface. It demands, of conſequence, angular Forms, which, by admitting greater perfection of poliſh, or, at leaſt, by diſplaying it better, are more beautiful than Curves, which require both greater ſolidity,

dity, and have leſs brilliancy. A ſword Hilt, or a watch Chain, are infinitely finer and more beautiful, when they are compoſed of angular Forms, than when they are compoſed of Curves. In the Forms which are given to Jewels, the ſame rule univerſally obtains. The delicacy of ſuch ſubjects is in their Brilliancy. The only Form therefore that is beautiful in them, is that which diſplays it.

There is no ſubject of this kind, in which Beauty of Form is more generally conſulted, or indeed more generally found, than in the different articles of houſehold Furniture. Such objects, by being compoſed of the uniform material of Wood, and that a hard and durable one, admit of little difference in point of Delicacy, but in the Quantity, or in the Form which is given to this Material. With regard to the firſt, all Furniture, I apprehend, is Beautiful in proportion to the ſmallneſs of its quantity of Matter, or the Fineneſs or Delicacy of the parts of it. Strong and Maſſy Furniture, is every where vulgar and unpleaſing, and though in point of utility, we pardon it in general uſe, yet wherever we expect Elegance or Beauty, we naturally look for Fineneſs and Delicacy in it. The actual Progreſs of Taſte in this Article is from Strength to Delicacy. The firſt articles of Furniture in every country are ſtrong and ſubſtantial. As Taſte improves, and as it is found that Beauty, as well as Utility, may be conſulted in ſuch ſubjects, their ſtrength and ſolidity are gradually diminiſhed, until at laſt by ſucceſſive improvement, the progreſs terminates in

in that laſt degree of Delicacy and even of Fragility, which is conſiſtent either with the nature of the Workmanſhip, or the preſervation of the Subject.

In this Progreſs, it is diſcovered, that where the material which is employed is hard and durable, the greateſt Delicacy which can be given to the Form, is rather in the uſe of direct and angular Lines, than in winding and ſerpentine ones; and chiefly from the reaſon I have before mentioned, that Curves cannot be employed without a proportionable and very obvious increaſe of Solidity, and by thoſe means, deſtroying in a great meaſure the expreſſion of Delicacy. Whoever will look into any of thoſe books, which have made us acquainted with the Forms of Grecian or Roman Furniture, in their periods of cultivated Taſte, will perceive accordingly, that in ſcarcely any of them, is the winding or ſerpentine Form obſerved; and that on the contrary, the lighteſt and moſt beautiful of them, are almoſt univerſally diſtinguiſhed by ſtraight or angular Lines, and by the utmoſt poſſible diminution of Solidity, that is conſiſtent either with convenience or uſe. What is there, for inſtance, more beautiful in this kind, than the Form of the ancient Tripod, in the beſt periods of Roman Taſte? The feet gradually leſſening to the end, and converging as they approach it; the plane of the table placed with little ornament, nearly at right angles to the feet; and the whole appearing to form an imperfect triangle, whoſe baſe is above. There is ſcarcely

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in ſuch a ſubject, a poſſibility of contriving a more angular Form, yet there can be none more completely Beautiful: becauſe this Form itſelf is more immediately expreſſive of Delicacy, than almoſt any other which could have been imagined: the ſlightneſs of the whole fabric, the decreaſing proportion of the feet as they deſcend to the ground, the convergence of the feet themſelves, and the narrowneſs of the baſe for the ſuperſtructure, expreſſing not only the utmoſt degree of Delicacy that is conſiſtent with uſe, but impreſſing us alſo with the further conviction of the neceſſity of approaching or handling it with tenderneſs, for fear of deſtroying its ſlight Stability. From this elegant Model accordingly, or from others, in which the ſame principle obtains, the greater part of the moſt beautiful articles of Modern Furniture are imitated. It is this Form which prevails in the conſtruction of Chairs, Tables, Sophas, Beds, *&c.* and it is the Delicacy which it ſo well expreſſes, that beſtows upon them the greater part of their Beauty. The application of winding or ſerpentine Lines, or of the more general Form of Beauty, would tend to diminiſh their effect, by beſtowing upon them the appearance of a greater degree of Solidity, and thus leſſening, inſtead of increaſing the expreſſion which is the cauſe of this effect.

In the courſe of theſe obſervations, the Reader will obſerve, that I have all along gone upon the ſuppoſition, that there is in reality only one ſpecies of winding or curvilinear Form;

Form; and that I have confined my obſervations upon their expreſſion to this general character of Form. Every one knows, however, that ſuch Forms admit of great variety, and that the number of different curvatures that may be produced are almoſt infinite. Whoever then will take the trouble of purſuing this inveſtigation, may, I think, eaſily ſatisfy himſelf; that among theſe, there is none uniformly and permanently beautiful; that the ſame Curve which is beautiful in one caſe, is very often not beautiful in others; and that in all caſes that curvature is the moſt beautiful, which is moſt fully expreſſive of Delicacy or Eaſe in the ſubject which it diſtinguiſhes. As Forms of this kind differ alſo in the number, as well as in the nature of their curvatures, he will perceive alſo, that the ſame dependence upon their expreſſions continues; that the ſame number of curvatures or windings which are beautiful in one ſubject, are not beautiful in others; and that whenever in any ſubject the number of windings exceeds our opinion of Eaſe or Facility, it from that period becomes unpleaſing, and expreſſive only of Force or Conſtraint. The limits which I muſt preſcribe to myſelf in theſe obſervations, oblige me, in this, as in every other part of them, to refer much of the illuſtration which might be produced, to the Reader's own Reflection and Inveſtigation.

If the obſervations which I have now offered on the Natural Beauty of Forms, or that Beauty which ariſes from the conſideration of Form

Form itſelf, be juſt, we may perhaps, without much impropriety, reſt in the following concluſions on the ſubject.

1. That the Beauty of ſuch Forms ariſes from the qualities of Fineneſs, Delicacy, or Eaſe, of which they are expreſſive.

2. That in every ſubject, that Form (whether angular or curvilinear) which is moſt expreſſive of theſe qualities, is the moſt beautiful Form. And,

3. That, in general, the curvilinear or winding Form, as moſt frequently expreſſive of theſe qualities, is the moſt beautiful.

With regard alſo to thoſe Arts which are employed in the imitation or invention of ornamental Forms, the following obſervations may not be without their uſe:

1. That wherever Natural Forms are imitated, thoſe will be the moſt beautiful, which are moſt expreſſive of Delicacy and Eaſe.

2. That wherever new or arbitrary Forms are invented, that Form will be the moſt beautiful, which is compoſed by the moſt beautiful Lines, or, in other words, by Lines which have the moſt pleaſing Expreſſion. And,

3. That wherever the ſubject of the Form is of a hard or durable nature, that Form will be the moſt beautiful, in which the ſmalleſt quantity of Matter is employed, and the greateſt delicacy of execution exerted.

The truth of theſe remarks I leave altogether to be determined by the obſervation of the reader. I ſhall only obſerve, that in the proſecution of this Inquiry, it is neceſſary to leave out of conſideration every circumſtance, of Deſign, of Fitneſs, or of Utility, and to conſider Forms in the light only of their appearance to the Eye, without any relation either to an author or an end. Theſe relations (as will be ſhown afterwards) are the foundation of a diſtinct ſpecies of Beauty, to which the principles of their natural Beauty do not apply.

Although, however, I have thus been led to concluſions different from thoſe of Mr. Hogarth, yet it is but juſtice to a performance of uncommon ingenuity, to acknowledge, that the principle which he has endeavoured to eſtabliſh in his Analyſis of Beauty, is perhaps of all others the juſteſt and beſt founded principle which has as yet been maintained in the inveſtigation of the Natural Beauty of Forms. The inſtances which I have produced, and many others of the ſame kind, that will probably occur to every man of reflection, ſeem to me very ſtrongly to ſhow, that

that the principle of the abſolute Beauty of Serpentine Forms is to be conſidered only as a general principle, ſubject to many exceptions; and that not only this Form is beauful, from being the Sign of particular intereſting and affecting qualities, but that in fact alſo, Forms of the contrary kind are likewiſe beautiful, when they are expreſſive of the ſame qualities.

PART III.

Of the COMPOSITION *of* FORMS.

I.

The preceding obſervations relate altogether to Simple Forms, or to ſuch Forms as are deſcribed by a ſingle Line.

It is obvious, however, that there are very few Forms of ſuch a kind. In the greater part of beautiful Forms, whether in Nature or in Art, Lines of different deſcriptions unite, and there is a Beauty felt in certain combinations of theſe Lines, or in the production of a complex Form. The principles, therefore, which account for the Beauty of Simple Forms, cannot be ſuppoſed to account alſo for that peculiar Beauty which ariſes from the union of ſuch Forms in Compoſition.

Simple Forms are diſtinguiſhed to the Eye, by the uniformity or ſimilarity of the Line by which they are deſcribed. Complex Forms are diſtinguiſhed by the mixture of ſimilarity and diſſimilarity in theſe Lines, or, in other words, by their Uniformity and Variety. The ſame principle which leads us to aſcribe the Beauty of ſimple

ple Forms, to ſome original Beauty in theſe Forms themſelves, leads us alſo to aſcribe the Beauty of complex Forms, to ſome original fitneſs in the Compoſition of Uniformity and Variety, to produce this Emotion.

That the Compoſition of Uniformity and Variety in Forms is agreeable, or is fitted by the conſtitution of our nature to excite an agreeable ſenſation in the Senſe of Sight, I am not diſpoſed to diſpute. That theſe qualities are alſo capable of conveying to us very pleaſing and very intereſting expreſſions, and that in this manner they are felt as beautiful, I ſhall endeavour to ſhow in the next chapter; but that the union of ſuch material qualities as perceived by the Eye, and without reference to any Expreſſion, is not in itſelf, and eſſentially beautiful, is obvious from the following conſiderations, of which I ſhall devolve the illuſtration upon the reader himſelf.

1. If the Compoſition of Uniformity and Variety in Forms, were in itſelf beautiful, it would neceſſarily follow, that in every caſe where this Compoſition was found, the Form would be beautiful. The greater part of Forms, both in Art and Nature, are poſſeſſed of this union. The greater part of theſe Forms, however, are not beautiful.

2. If it is ſaid, that it is not the mere union of Uniformity and Variety, but a certain union of them, which is beautiful, then this peculiar union muſt in all caſes be neceſſarily beautiful. The only

only difference between Forms in this reſpect, muſt be either in the number or in the degree of their uniform, or of their varied parts. Let any particular or certain Compoſition of theſe parts be fixed upon; it will be found, that ſo far is this union of uniformity and variety from being in itſelf beautiful, that it cannot be extended to objects of any different kind, without altogether deſtroying their Beauty.

3. If it is farther ſaid, that it is not any certain, but a proper Compoſition of Uniformity and Variety which is beautiful, then it is obvious, that this propriety is not the object of our external Senſes, and that whatever Beauty ariſes from the Compoſition of theſe qualities, is to be aſcribed to ſome other principle than to the mere material qualities alone.

II.

If, on the other hand, the account which has been given of the Natural Beauty of Forms, as expreſſive of certain affecting or intereſting qualities, be juſt, it ſeems natural to ſuppoſe, that in the Compoſition of Forms, ſome propriety ſhould ariſe from the Compoſition of EXPRESSION; that as Lines are diſtinguiſhed by different characters, the mixture of different Lines ſhould produce confuſion, inſtead of Beauty; and that the Compoſition of Form ſhould then only be beautiful, when the ſame relation is preſerved amid variety, which is demanded in all other caſes of Compoſition †.

That

† Eſſay I. Chap. II. Sect. III.

That this is really the caſe, will, I truſt, appear probable, from the following conſiderations:

1. I conceive it will be found, that the union of ſuch qualities is felt as beautiful, only in thoſe caſes where the object itſelf has ſome determinate Expreſſion; and that in objects where no ſuch general Expreſſion is found, no Beauty is expected in their Compoſition.

In the preſent caſe, Uniformity and Variety, mean Similarity and Diſſimilarity of Form. Every one knows, however, that the mere union of Similarity and Diſſimilarity does not conſtitute a beautiful Form. In the Forms of Ground, of Water, of Vegetables, of Ornaments, *&c.* it is difficult to find any inſtance of a perfectly Simple Form, or in which Lines of different deſcriptions do not unite. It is obvious, however, that ſuch objects are not beautiful in ſo great a proportion, and that, on the contrary, in all of them there are caſes where this mixture is mere confuſion, and in no reſpect conſidered as beautiful. If we enquire farther, what is the circumſtance which diſtinguiſhes beautiful objects of theſe kinds, it will be found, I believe, that it is ſome determinate character or Expreſſion which they have to us; and that when this Expreſſion is once perceived, we immediately look for and expect, ſome relation among the different parts to this general character.

It is almoſt impoſſible, for inſtance, to find any Form of Ground which is not complex, or in

in which different forms do not unite. Amid a great extent of landſcape, however, there are few ſpots in which we are ſenſible of any beauty in their original formation; and wherever ſuch ſpots occur, they are always diſtinguiſhed by ſome prominent character; the character of Greatneſs, Wildneſs, Gaiety, Tranquillity, or Melancholy. As ſoon as this impreſſion is made, as ſoon as we feel the expreſſion of the ſcene, we immediately become ſenſible, that the differeni Forms which compoſe it are ſuited to this character; we perceive, and very often we imagine a correſpondence among theſe parts, and we ſay accordingly, that there is a relation, an harmony among them, and that Nature has been kind, in combining different circumſtances with ſo much propriety, for the production of one effect. We amuſe ourſelves alſo, in imagining improvemeuts to the ſcene, either in throwing out ſome circumſtances which do not correſpond, or in introducing new ones, by which the general character may be more effectually ſupported. All this Beauty of Compoſition, however, would have been unheeded, if the ſcene itſelf had not ſome determinate character; and all that we intend, by theſe imaginary improvements, either in the preſervation of greater Uniformity, or in the introduction of greater Variety, is to eſtabliſh a more perfect relation among the different parts to this peculiar character.

In the laying out of grounds, in the ſame manner, every man knows, that the mere Compoſition of ſimilar and diſſimilar Forms does not conſtitute Beauty; that ſome character is neceſ-

ſary,

ſary, to which we may refer the relation of the different parts; and that where no ſuch character can be created, the Compoſition itſelf is only confuſion. It is upon theſe principles, accordingly, that we uniformly judge of the Beauty of ſuch ſcenes. If there is no character diſcernible, no general Expreſſion, which may afford our imaginations the key of the ſcene, although we may be pleaſed with its neatneſs, or its cultivation, we feel no Beauty whatever in its compoſition; and we leave it with no other impreſſion than that of regret, that ſo much labour and expence ſhould be thrown away upon ſo confuſed and ungrateful a ſubject. If, on the other hand, the ſcene is expreſſive, if the general Form is ſuch as to inſpire ſome peculiar Emotion, and the different circumſtances ſuch as to correſpond to this effect, or to increaſe it, we immediately conclude, that the Compoſition is good, and yield ourſelves willingly to its influence. If, laſtly, amid ſuch a ſcene, we find circumſtances introduced, which have no relation to the general Expreſſion; if Forms of Gaiety and Gloom, Greatneſs and Ornament, Rudeneſs and Tranquillity, *&c.* are mingled together without any attention to one determinate effect, we turn with indignation from the confuſion, and conclude, that the Compoſition is defective in its firſt principles. In all caſes of this kind, we become ſenſible of the Beauty of Compoſition, only when the ſcene has ſome general character, to which the different Forms in Compoſition can refer; and determine its Beauty by the effect of this union in maintaining or promoting this general Expreſſion. The ſame obſervation may be extended

tended to the Forms of Wood and Water; but I willingly refer the reader to Mr. Whately's excellent "Obſervations upon Modern Gar-"dening," for the full illuſtration of this remark, with regard to the different objects of natural ſcenery.

In the Vegetable World, alſo, if the mere compoſition of Uniformity and Variety were ſufficient to conſtitute Beauty, it would almoſt be impoſſible to find any inſtance where Vegetable Forms ſhould not be beautiful. That this is not the caſe every one knows; and the leaſt attention to the language of Mankind will ſhew, that wherever ſuch Forms are beautiful, they are felt as characteriſtic or expreſſive; and that the Beauty of the Compoſition is determined by the ſame principle, which regulates our opinion with regard to the Compoſition of the Forms of Ground. The beautiful Forms which we ourſelves remark in this kingdom; the Forms which have been ſelected by Sculptors for embelliſhment or ornament, by Painters for the effect of landſcape, by Poets for deſcription or alluſion, are all ſuch as have ſome determinate Expreſſion or Aſſociation; their Beauty is generally expreſſed by epithets ſignificant of this Character; and if we are aſked the reaſon of our admiration, we immediately aſſign this Expreſſion as a reaſon ſatisfactory to ourſelves for the Beauty we diſcover in them. As ſoon alſo as we feel this Expreſſion in any Vegetable Form, we perceive, or demand a relation among the different parts to this peculiar Character. If this relation is maintained, we feel immediately that the Compoſition of the Form is

good.

good. We ſhew it as a beautiful inſtance of the operation of Nature, and we ſpeak of it, as a Form in which the utmoſt harmony and felicity of Compoſition is diſplayed. If, on the contrary, the different parts do not ſeem adjuſted to the general character, if inſtead of an agreement among theſe parts in the maintaining or promoting this Expreſſion, there appears only a mixture of ſimilar and diſſimilar parts, without any correſpondence or alliance, we reject it as a confuſed and inſignificant Form, without meaning or beauty. If, in the ſame manner, the general Form has no Expreſſion, we paſs it by without attention, and with a conviction, that where there is no Character to which the relation of the different parts may be referred, there can be no propriety or beauty in its Compoſition.

In the different ſpecies of Vegetables which poſſeſs Expreſſion, and which conſequently admit of Beauty in Compoſition, it is obſervable alſo, that every individual does not poſſeſs this Beauty; and it is the ſame principle which determines our opinion of the Beauty of Individuals, that determines our opinion of the Beauty of different ſpecies. The Oak, the Myrtle, the weeping Willow, the Vine, the Ivy, the Roſe, *&c.* are beautiful claſſes of Plants: but every Oak and Myrtle, *&c.* does not conſtitute a beautiful Form. The many phyſical cauſes which affect their growth, affect alſo their Expreſſion; and it is only when they poſſeſs in purity the peculiar Character of the claſs, that the individuals are felt as beautiful. In the judgment accordingly

accordingly that we form of this Beauty, we are uniformly guided by the circumſtance of their Expreſſion. When, in any of theſe inſtances, we find an accumulation of Forms, different from what we generally meet with, we feel a kind of diſappointment; and however much the Compoſition may exhibit of mere uniform and varied parts, we paſs it by with ſome degree of indignation. When the diſcordant parts are few, we lament that accident ſhould have introduced a variety which is ſo prejudicial, and we amuſe ourſelves with fancying how beautiful the Form would be, if theſe parts were omitted. It is only when we diſcover a general correſpondence among the different parts to the whole of the character; and perceive the uniformity of this character maintained amid all their varieties, that we are fully ſatisfied with the Beauty of the Form. The ſuperiority of the productions of Sculpture and Painting to their originals in Nature, altogether conſiſts in the power which the Artiſts have to correct theſe accidental defects, in keeping out every circumſtance which can interrupt the general Expreſſion of the ſubject or the Form, and in preſenting, pure and unmixed, the character which we have aſſociated with the objects in real Nature.

The ſame obſervation extends to every ſpecies of artificial Form; but the purſuit of it would neceſſarily lead to a very long, and I believe a very unneceſſary diſcuſſion. With regard to this ſubject, I ſhall leave the Reader to his own obſervation, and ſhall only beg of him to reflect, whether,

ther, if the Compoſition of uniformity and variety was neceſſarily beautiful, every ſpecies almoſt of artificial Form would not be found to be beautiful; whether, on the contrary, the Beauty of Compoſition is not perceived in thoſe ſubjects only where the Form itſelf has ſome Character or Expreſſion, or where it affords him ſome diſtinct principle, to which the relation of the different parts may be referred; and whether he does not determine the Beauty of the Compoſition, by the effect of this union of different parts in exciting one definite Emotion. It is perhaps unneceſſary to remark, that in purſuing ſuch obſervations, it is proper to leave out every conſideration of deſign or of utility, and that the fitteſt ſubjects for ſuch experiments are ornamental Forms, or thoſe Forms in which no other object is ſought, than the mere production of Beauty.

I ſhall content myſelf with obſerving upon this ſubject, that whatever is the ſource of the Beauty of complex Forms, it is natural to ſuppoſe, it ſhould be expreſſed in language; and that if uniformity and variety were beautiful in themſelves, and by the conſtitution of our Nature, it is reaſonable to think, that in deſcribing beautiful Forms, ſuch qualities ſhould be aſſigned as the foundation of their Beauty. If I am not deceived, however, this is very far from being the caſe. In deſcribing ſuch objects, we never ſatisfy ourſelves with diſtinguiſhing them by ſuch characters, and if any perſon were in ſuch terms to deſcribe any Form to ourſelves, we ſhould be at as great a loſs as ever, with regard to its Beauty.

I apprehend,

I apprehend, on the contrary, that the natural and uniform method we take for this purpoſe, is firſt to convey to our hearers the idea of its Character or Expreſſion, and after having given them this general conception of it, we enter into the detail of its Compoſition, and endeavour to explain to them, with how great propriety the different parts are accommodated, to preſerve and to promote this characteriſtic Expreſſion; and if we ſucceed in this deſcription, we never fail not only to be underſtood, but to convey alſo to thoſe who hear us, a perfect belief of the Excellence and Beauty of the Compoſition. If the mere mixture of uniformity and variety were beautiful, independent of any relation to Expreſſion, all this natural proceſs could never take place, and if it did, could never convey any opinion of Beauty.

2. I believe it will be found, that different proportions of Uniformity and Variety, are required in Forms of different characters; and that the principle from which we determine the Beauty of ſuch proportion, is from its correſpondence to the nature of the peculiar Emotion which the Form itſelf is fitted to excite. Every one knows, that ſome Emotions require a greater degree of uuiformity, and others a greater degree of variety in their objects; and perhaps, in general, all ſtrong or powerful Emotions, and all Emotions which border upon pain, demand uniformity or ſameneſs, and all weak Emotions, and all Emotions which belong to poſitive pleaſure, demand variety or novelty, in the objects of them. Upon this conſtitution of our Nature, the

the Beauty of Compoſition ſeems chiefly to depend; and the judgment we form of this Beauty, appears in all caſes to be determined by the correſpondence of the different parts of the Compoſition in preſerving or promoting the peculiar Expreſſion by which the object itſelf is diſtinguiſhed.

In the Forms of Ground, for inſtance, there is very obviouſly, no certain proportion of uniformity and variety which is permanently beautiful. The ſame degree of uniformity which is pleaſing in a ſcene of Greatneſs or Melancholy, would be diſagreeable or dull in a ſcene of Gaiety or Splendor. The ſame degree of variety which would be beautiful in theſe, would be diſtreſſing in the others. By what rule, however, do we determine the different Beauty of theſe proportions? Not ſurely by the Compoſition itſelf, elſe one determinate Compoſition would be permanently beautiful: but by the relation of this Compoſition to the Expreſſion or Character of the ſcene; by its according with the demand and expectation of our Minds; and by its being ſuited to that particular ſtate of attention or of fancy, which is produced by the Emotion that the ſcene inſpires. When this effect is accordingly produced, when the proportion either of uniformity or variety correſponds to the nature of this Emotion, we conclude, that the Compoſition is good. When this proportion is violated, when there is more uniformity of Expreſſion, than we chuſe to dwell upon, or more variety than we can follow without diſtraction, we conclude that the Compoſition is defective, and

ſpeak

ſpeak of it either as dull or confuſed. Whatever may be the number of diſtinct Characters, which the Forms of Ground poſſeſs, there is an equal number of different proportions required in the Compoſition of them: and ſo ſtrong is this natural determination of the Beauty of Compoſition, that after admiring the Compoſition of one ſcene, we very often, in a few minutes afterwards, find equal Beauty in a Compoſition of a totally different kind, when it diſtinguiſhes a ſcene of an oppoſite character.

" The ſtyle of every part (ſays Mr. Whately, " in the concluſion of his Obſervations upon " Ground) muſt be accommodated to the cha- " racter of the whole; for every piece of ground " is diſtinguiſhed by certain properties: it is " either tame or bold, gentle or rude, conti- " nued or broken; and if any variety inconſiſt- " ent with theſe properties be obtruded, it has " no other effect than to weaken one idea, with- " out raiſing another. The inſipidity of a flat, " is not taken away by a few ſcattered hillocks; " a continuation of uneven ground can alone give " the idea of inequality. A large, deep, abrupt " break, among eaſy ſwells and falls, ſeems at " beſt but a piece left unfiniſhed, and which " ought to have been ſoftened: it is not more " natural, becauſe it is more rude. On the other " hand, a ſmall fine poliſhed Form, in the midſt " of rough miſhapen ground, though more ele- " gant than all about it, is generally no better " than a patch, itſelf diſgraced, and diſfiguring " the ſcene. A thouſand inſtances might be add- " ed, to ſhow, that the prevailing idea ought

" to

" to pervade every part, ſo far at leaſt indiſpen-
" ſably, as to exclude whatever diſtracts it; and
" as much further as poſſible to accommodate
" the character of the ground to that of the ſcene
" it belongs to."

After obſerving that the ſame principle extends to the proportion, and to the number of the parts, he obſerves, " That ground is ſeldom
" beautiful or natural without variety, or even
" without contraſt; and the precautions which
" have been given, extend no farther, than to
" prevent variety from degenerating into incon-
" ſiſtency, and contraſt into contradiction.
" Within the extremes Nature ſupplies an inex-
" hauſtible fund; and variety thus limited, ſo
" far from deſtroying, improves the general ef-
" fect. Each diſtinguiſhed part makes a ſeparate
" impreſſion; and all bearing the ſame ſtamp,
" all concurring to the ſame end, every one is
" an additional ſupport to the prevailing idea.—
" An accurate obſerver will ſee in every Form
" ſeveral circumſtances, by which it is diſtin-
" guiſhed from every other. If the ſcene be
" mild and quiet, he will place together thoſe
" which do not differ widely, and he will gra-
" dually depart from the ſimilitude. In ruder
" ſcenes, the ſucceſſion will be leſs regular, and
" the tranſitions more ſudden. The character
" of the place muſt determine the degree of dif-
" ference between contiguous Forms.—An aſ-
" ſemblage of the moſt elegant Forms in the hap-
" pieſt ſituations is to a degree indiſcriminate, if
" they have not been ſelected and arranged with
" a deſign to produce certain Expreſſions: an

" air of magnificence or of ſimplicity, of cheer-
" fulneſs, tranquillity, or ſome other general
" character, ought to pervade the whole; and
" objects pleaſing in themſelves, if they contra-
" dict that character, ſhould therefore be ex-
" cluded; thoſe which are only indifferent muſt
" ſometimes make room for ſuch as are more ſig-
" nificant; many will often be introduced for
" no other merit than their Expreſſion; and
" ſome which are in general rather diſagreeable,
" may occaſionally be recommended by it. Bar-
" renneſs itſelf may be an acceptable circum-
" ſtance in a ſpot dedicated to Solitude and Me-
" lancholy." As the great ſecret of gardening, ſeems thus to conſiſt in the accurate preſervation of the character of every ſcene, whether original or created; ſo it is the ſame principle that determines the opinion of men with regard to its Beauty; and whoever will read Mr. Whately's excellent book with attention, will perceive that all his rules with regard to the Forms of Ground, of Water, of Wood, of Rocks, and of Buildings may be referred to this leading principle; and that they are nothing more than inveſtigations of the character of theſe different Forms, and directions how to apply them in ſcenes of different Expreſſion.

Our opinion of the Beauty of vegetable forms ſeems directed by the ſame principle. Many of the claſſes of trees have diſtinct characters. There are therefore different compoſitions which are beautiful in their forms; and in all of them, that Compoſition only is beautiful which correſponds to the nature of the Expreſſion they have, or of the

the Emotion which they excite. The character, for inſtance, of the weeping willow, is melancholy, of the birch and of the aſpin, gaiety: the character of the horſe-cheſnut, is ſolemnity, of the oak, majeſty, of the yew, ſadneſs. In each of theſe caſes, the general Form or Compoſition of theſe parts is altogether different; all of them, however, are beautiful; and were this proportion in point of Compoſition changed, were the weeping willow to aſſume an equal degree of variety with the oak, or the oak to ſhew an equal degree of uniformity with the weeping willow, we ſhould undoubtedly feel it as a defect, and conclude that in this change of Form, the Beauty of the character and of the Compoſition was loſt.

It is in this manner, accordingly, that we judge of the Beauty of individuals, in theſe different claſſes. All theſe individuals are not beautiful; and wherever they appear as beautiful, it is when their Form adheres perfectly to their character; when no greater degree either of uniformity or variety is aſſumed, than ſuits that peculiar Emotion which their expreſſion excites in our minds. An oak, which wreathes not into vigorous or fantaſtic branches, a yew, which grows into thin and varied forms, a plane-tree, or a horſe-cheſnut, which aſſumes not a deep, and almoſt ſolid maſs of foliage, &c. appear to us as imperfect and deformed productions. They ſeem to aim at an expreſſion which they do not reach, and we ſpeak of them accordingly as wanting the Beauty, becauſe they want the character of their claſs.

In the formation of beautiful groups, the ſame adherence to Expreſſion is neceſſary: and whatever may be the character of the group, the real limit to variety, is correſpondence in this Expreſſion. The permanent character of trees ariſes from their Form or their Colour. In ſo far as Form is concerned, Forms of different character are never found to unite, or to conſtitute a beautiful compoſition. A mixture, for inſtance, or the light and upright branches of the almond, with the falling branches of the willow, the heavy branches of the horſe-cheſnut, and the wild arms of the oak, would be abſolute confuſion, and would be intolerable in any ſcene where deſign or intention could be ſuppoſed. The mixture of trees, on the other hand, that correſpond in their Forms, and that unite in the production of one character, are found to conſtitute beautiful groups. We ſpeak of them accordingly as beautiful from this cauſe: When we meet with them in natural ſcenery, we are pleaſed with the fortunate, though accidental connection, and we ſay, that they could not have been better united by the hand of Art: When we meet with them in cultivated ſcenes, we praiſe the taſte of the artiſt, and ſay, that the Compoſition is pure and harmonious. "Trees (ſays Mr. Whately) "which differ but in one of theſe circumſtances, "whether of ſhape, of green, or of growth, "though they agree in every other, are ſufficient-"ly diſtinguiſhed for the purpoſe of Variety; if "they differ in two or three, they become con-"traſts: if in all, they are oppoſites and ſeldom "group well together. Thoſe, on the contrary, "which are of one character, and are diſtin-

"guiſhed

" guiſhed only as the characteriſtic mark, is " ſtrongly or faintly impreſſed upon them, as a " young beech, and a birch, an acacia and a " larch, all pendent, though in different de- " grees, form a beautiful maſs, in which unity " is preſerved without ſameneſs." How far the ſame principle extends to landſcape painting, they who are acquainted with the art will be at no loſs to determine.

In all the different kinds of ornamental Forms, in the ſame manner, inſtead of there being any one determinate proportion of Uniformity and Variety beautiful, there are, in fact, as many varieties of beautiful Compoſition, as there are varieties of Character; and the rule by which we judge of this Beauty, in every particular caſe, is by the correſpondence of the Compoſition, to the character which the Form is intended to expreſs. To give the ſame proportion of uniform or of varied parts to every ſpecies of ornamental Form, to Forms of Splendor, of Magnificence, of Gaiety, of Delicacy, or of Melancholy, would be to ſin againſt the very firſt principle of Compoſition, and would immediately be detected even by thoſe who never heard of the principles of Compoſition. The beautiful Form of the Vaſe, for inſtance, is employed in many different kinds of ornament, and may either be Magnificent, Elegant, Simple, Gay, or Melancholy. In all theſe caſes, however, the Compoſition is different. A greater proportion of Uniformity diſtinguiſhes it when deſtined to the Expreſſion of Simplicity, Magnificence or Melancholy, and a greater proportion of Variety, when deſtined to the Expreſ-

ſion

ſion of Elegance, or Gaiety. We immediately perceive alſo that there is propriety and Beauty in this difference of Compoſition; and if we are aſked, why it is ſo, we readily anſwer, becauſe it accords with the peculiar character which the Form is there intended to have. If, on the other hand, this proportion is inverted, if the Vaſe upon a tomb has all the varieties of a Goblet, or the latter all the uniformity of the funereal Urn, we immediately perceive an impropriety and deformity, and as readily explain it, by ſaying that the Compoſition is unfitted to the Expreſſion which the object is intended to have.

The Orders of Architecture have different characters from ſeveral cauſes, and chiefly, I believe, from the different quantities of matter in their Entablatures. The Tuſcan is diſtinguiſhed by its Severity; the Doric by its Simplicity; the Ionic by its Elegance; the Corinthian and Compoſite by their Lightneſs and Gaiety. To theſe characters, their ſeveral ornaments are ſuited with conſummate Taſte. Change theſe ornaments, give to the Tuſcan the Corinthian Capital, or to the Corinthian the Tuſcan, and every perſon would feel not only a diſappointment from this unexpected Compoſition, but a ſentiment alſo of impropriety from the appropriation of a grave or ſober ornament to a ſubject of Splendor, and of a rich or gaudy ornament to a ſubject of Severity. Even in the commoneſt of all Forms, the Forms of Furniture, the ſame principle is obvious. Chairs, Tables, Mirrors, Candleſticks, *&c.* may have very different characters; they may be either Simple, Elegant, Rich

Rich or Magnificent. Whatever this character may be, we demand a correſpondence in the Compoſition. The ſame number of uniform parts, which is beautiful in any ſimple Form is inſipid in an elegant, and mean in a rich or magnificent one. The ſame variety of parts which is beautiful in a Form of ſplendor or magnificence, is confuſed in an elegant, and taudry in a ſimple Form.

In theſe, and a thouſand other caſes of the ſame kind, it will be found, that no certain proportion of Uniformity and Variety is permanently felt as beautiful; that, on the contrary, wherever the Form, either in itſelf, or from its ſituation, has any determinate Expreſſion, the Beauty of Compoſition ariſes from its correſpondence to that Expreſſion; and that wherever Forms differ in character, a different Compoſition is approved, and is ſaid to be approved, upon this account. I ſhall only add to theſe hints upon the ſubject, that the natural language of men is uniformly guided by this principle; and that whenever they attempt to deſcribe the excellence of any Compoſition, it is not by explaining the peculiar proportions of Uniformity and Variety which may obtain in it, but by ſhowing how well this proportion accords with the Expreſſion by which the object itſelf is diſtinguiſhed.

If the illuſtrations which I have now offered are juſt, we ſhall have reaſon to conclude, that the mere Compoſition of Uniformity and Variety is not beautiful in itſelf, or from the original conſtitution of our nature; that it is felt as beau-

tiful

tiful only in thoſe caſes, where the Form is diſtinguiſhed by ſome character or Expreſſion; and, that the Beauty of the Compoſition ariſes, in every caſe, from its correſpondence to the nature of that Emotion which this Expreſſion is fitted to excite.

Theſe concluſions ſeem to lead to a very different rule for the Compoſition of beautiful Forms, from that which Mr. Hogarth has laid down in his Analyſis of Beauty. "The way "(ſays he) of compoſing pleaſing Forms, is to "be accompliſhed by making choice of variety "of lines, as to their ſhapes and dimenſions; "and then again by varying their ſituations "with each other, by all the different ways that "can be conceived, and at the ſame time (if a "ſolid Figure be the ſubject of the Compoſition) "the contents or ſpace that is to be incloſed "within thoſe lines, muſt be duly conſidered "and varied too, as much as poſſible with pro-"priety." Although it is with much diffidence that I differ from Mr. Hogarth, yet I cannot help being of opinion, (in ſo far at leaſt as the natural Beauty of Forms is concerned), that this rule might be followed in a thouſand caſes, without the production of any degree of Beauty; that if the diſtinguiſhing Form is inexpreſſive or indifferent, all this Variety would only create confuſion; and that in its application to Forms of different characters or Expreſſion, it would excite a ſentiment of impropriety, inſtead of pleaſure.

On the other hand, the view which I have now given of the ſubject, would ſeem to lead to the following rules for beautiful Compoſition:

1. That

1. That wherever beautiful Form is intended, ſome characteriſtic or expreſſive Form ſhould be ſelected, as the ground or ſubject of the Compoſition. And,

2. That the Variety (whether in the form, the number, or the proportion of the part) ſhould be adapted to the peculiar nature of this Expreſſion, or of that Emotion which this Expreſſion is fitted to excite in the mind of the ſpectator.

3. Forms of this kind are either ſingle or dependent. In ſingle or independent Forms, their character is at the pleaſure of the Artiſt; and that will be always moſt beautiful, in which the character is beſt preſerved.

4. In dependent Forms, on the contrary, or thoſe which are deſigned for particular ſcenes or ſituations, their character muſt be determined by that of the ſcene or ſituation; and that alſo will be the moſt beautiful Form, in the compoſition of which, the alliance to the general character is moſt preciſe and delicate.

III.

The ſame principle ſeems to extend to the Compoſition of COLOURS. The mere mixture of Colours is not beautiful. In the different Colours, that are mingled upon a Painter's pallet, or in a book of patterns, we ſay there is no Beauty, becauſe there is no Relation. What then is the relation which is neceſſary to conſtitute beautiful Compoſition? It is not the mere relation

tion of Colours, becauſe Colours of very different kinds are found to produce beautiful Compoſitions. It is not any eſtabliſhed relation between particular Colours which is beautiful from our original conſtitution, becauſe, in different ſubjects, different Compoſitions are neceſſary. I humbly apprehend, That it is the Relation of Expreſſion.

In Natural Scenery, for inſtance, the Colours of the great ingredients, Ground, Water, Wood, Rocks and Buildings are very different, and are ſuſceptible of great varieties. In every ſcene, however, which is expreſſive, we look for and demand an unity in the Expreſſion of theſe different Colours. We often find fault accordingly with the Colour of particular objects in ſuch ſcenes, and ſay that they are too Rich, too Solemn, or too Cheerful, for the reſt of the ſcene. The vivid Green, for inſtance, which is ſo pleaſing in a cheerful landſcape, would ill ſuit a ſcene of Melancholy or Deſolation. The brown heath which ſo ſingularly accords with ſcenes of Gloom or Barrenneſs, would be intolerable in a landſcape of Gaiety. The grey rock which throws ſo venerable an air over grave or ſolemn ſcenes, would have but a feeble effect in ſcenes of horror. The blue and peaceful ſtream which gives ſuch lovelineſs to the ſolitary valley, would appear altogether miſplaced amid ſcenes of rude and ſavage Majeſty. The white foam and diſcoloured waters of the torrent, alone ſuit the wildneſs of their Expreſſion.

The

The great difference in the Colours of Trees, requires attention in their Compoſition into Groups. If the Oak, the Yew, the Birch, the Fir, the Aſpin, the Willow, *&c.* were mixed together indiſcriminately, every one would exclaim at the impropriety of the Compoſition, and ſay that there was no relation, and no character preſerved. Unite, however, only ſuch Trees, as are diſtinguiſhed by Colours of a ſimilar Character, the Compoſition will be beautiful, and the variety will only ſerve to enhance and ſtrengthen the Expreſſion. If any other rule but their Expreſſion were followed would the effect be the ſame?

Different Compoſitions of Colours alſo are neceſſary in the different appearances of Trees, whether as a Clump, a Thicket, a Grove, or a Wood. The ſame degree of uniformity in colouring which is beautiful in a Wood, is diſpleaſing in a Thicket or open Grove; the ſame degree of variety which is beautiful in theſe, is unpleaſing in the other. To what principle ſhall theſe differences be referred, but to the difference of Character; to the Airineſs and Gaiety of the one, to the Majeſty and Solemnity of the other?

The ſcenes of Nature often derive their Character even from the ſeaſon of the day in which they are viewed, and the aſpect which they regard. How much the Beauty of the Compoſition of Colours in ſuch ſcenes, ariſes from the Compoſition of their Expreſſion, is beautifully illuſtrated

illuſtrated in the following obſervations of Mr. WHATELY.

" Some Species and ſituations of objects are " in themſelves adapted to receive or to make " the impreſſion which characterize the princi- " pal parts of the day: their ſplendor, their ſo- " briety, and other peculiarities recommend or " prohibit them upon different occaſions: the " ſame conſiderations direct the choice alſo of " their appendages: and in conſequence of a ju- " dicious aſſemblage and arrangement of ſuch as " are proper for the purpoſe, the *Spirit* of the " Morning, the *Exceſs* of Noon, or the *Temper-* " *ance* of Evening, may be improved or cor- " rected by the application of the ſcene to the " ſeaſon.

" In the *Morning*, the freſhneſs of the air al- " lays the force of the ſun-beams, and their " brightneſs is free from glare; the moſt ſplen- " did objects do not offend the eye, nor ſuggeſt " the idea of heat in the extreme; but they " correſpond with the glitter of the dew which " beſpangles all the produce of the earth, and " with the cheerfulneſs diffuſed over the whole " face of creation. A variety of buildings may " therefore be introduced to enliven the view, " their colour may be the pureſt white without " danger of exceſs though they face the eaſtern " ſun; and thoſe which are in other aſpects " ſhould be ſo contrived, that their turrets, their " pinnacles, or other points, may catch glances " of the rays, and contribute to illuminate the " ſcene. The trees in general, ought to be of " the lighteſt greens, and ſo ſituated as not to

" darken

" darken much of the landſcape by the length " of their ſhadows. Vivacity in the ſtreams, " and tranſparency in a lake, are more import- " ant at this than at any other hour of the " day; and an open expoſure is commonly the " moſt delightful, both for the effect of par- " ticular objects, and the general character of " the ſcene.

" At *Noon*, every expedient ſhould be uſed " to correct the exceſs of the ſeaſon; the ſhades " are ſhortened, they muſt therefore be thick, " but open plantations are generally preferable " to a cloſe covert: they afford a paſſage, or at " leaſt, admittance to the air, which tempered " by the coolneſs of the place, ſoft to the " touch, and refreſhing at once to all the ſenſes, " renders the ſhade a delightful climate, not a " mere refuge from heat. Groves even at a " diſtance, ſuggeſt the ideas which they realize " upon the ſpot, and by multiplying the appear- " ances, improve the ſenſations of relief from " the extremity of the weather; Grottos, Caves " and Cells are on the ſame account agreeable " circumſtances in a ſequeſtered receſs: and " though the chill within be hardly ever tolera- " ble, the eye catches only an idea of coolneſs " from the ſight of them. Our buildings ought " in general to be caſt into ſhade, that the glare " of reflection from them may be obſcured. The " large expanſe of a lake is alſo too dazzling: " but a broad river moving gently, and parti- " ally darkened with ſhadow, is very refreſhing, " more ſo perhaps than a little rill, for the vi- " vacity of the latter rather diſturbs the repoſe

" which

" which generally prevails at mid-day: every " breeze then is ſtill; the reflection of an aſpin " leaf ſcarcely trembles on the water; the ani- " mals remit their ſearch of food, and man ceaſ- " es from his labour; the ſteam of heat ſeems " to oppreſs all the faculties of the mind, and " all the active powers of the body; and any " very lively motion diſcompoſes the languor " in which we then delight to indulge.

" In the *Evening* all ſplendor fades: no build- " ings glare, no water dazzles, the calmneſs of " a lake ſuits the quiet of the time, the light " hovers there, and prolongs the duration of " day. An open reach of a river has a ſimilar " though a fainter effect, and a continued " ſtream all expoſed, preſerves the laſt rays of " the ſun along the whole length of its courſe, " to beautify the landſcape. But a briſk cur- " rent is not ſo conſiſtent as a lake, with the " tranquillity of Evening, and other objects " ſhould in general conform to the temper of " the time: buildings of a duſky hue are moſt " agreeable to it. No contraſt of light and " ſhade can then be produced; but if the plan- " tations, which by their ſituations are the firſt " to be obſcured, be of the darkeſt greens, if " the buildings which have a weſtern aſpect " be of a light colour, and if the management " of the lawns and the water be adapted to " the ſame purpoſe, a diverſity of tints will be " preſerved long after the greater effects are " faded."

There

There are few ſubjects where the Beauty or Deformity of the Compoſition of Colours is more obſervable, or at leaſt more commonly obſerved, than in the article of DRESS. The following hints may perhaps lead the Reader to perceive, that this Beauty is alſo dependent upon Expreſſion.

1. It may be obſerved, that no Dreſs is beautiful, in which there is not ſome leading or predominant Colour diſplayed, or in which, if I may uſe the expreſſion, there is not ſome unity of colouring. A dreſs, in which different colours were employed in equal quantities, in which one half of the body was diſtinguiſhed by one Colour, and the other by another, or in which each particular limb was differently coloured, would be ridiculous inſtead of being beautiful. It is in this way accordingly, that Mountebanks are dreſſed, and it never fails to produce the effect that is intended by it, to excite the mirth and the ridicule of the common people.

2. No dreſs is ever remarked as beautiful, in which the prevailing Colour has not ſome pleaſing or affecting Expreſſion. There are a variety of colours which are choſen for common apparel, which have no Character or Expreſſion in themſelves, and which are choſen for no other reaſon, but becauſe they are convenient for the peculiar occupations or amuſements in which we are engaged. Such dreſs accordingly has no Beauty. When we ſay, that it is a uſeful or a convenient Colour, we give it all the approba-

tion

tion that it is entitled to. There are, on the contrary, a variety of colours which are expreſſive from peculiar Aſſociations, which are either gay, or delicate, or rich, or grave, or melancholy. It is always ſuch Colours that are choſen for what is properly called Dreſs, or for that ſpecies of Apparel, in which ſomething more than mere convenience is intended. When we ſpeak of ſuch Dreſs accordingly, we generally deſcribe its Beauty by its Character, by its being delicate or rich, or gay or magnificent, or in other words, by its being diſtinguiſhed by ſome pleaſing or affecting Expreſſion. We ſhould feel an equal impropriety in any perſon's chuſing the Colour of ornamental Dreſs, on account of its convenience, as in his chuſing the Colour of his common apparel, becauſe it was gay, or delicate, or ſplendid.

This difference of Expreſſion, conſtitutes the only diſtinction that ſeems to ſubſiſt between the Colours that are fit for common, and thoſe that are fit for ornamental apparel. But beſides this, there is another conſtituent of the Beauty of the prevailing Colour: its relation to the character or ſituation of the Perſon who wears it. The ſame Colour which would be beautiful in the dreſs of a Prince, would be ridiculous in the dreſs of a Peaſant. We expect gay Colours in the dreſs of youth, and ſober, and temperate colours in the dreſs of age. We feel a propriety in the cheerful Colours of a Marriage, and in the melancholy colouring of Mourning. There is a propriety of relation alſo between the colours that diſtinguiſh the Dreſs of certain ſituations,

ſituations, and theſe ſituations themſelves, which we never ſee violated without ſome degree of pain. Beſides all this, there is a relation of a ſtill more delicate kind; between the Colours of Dreſs, and the Character that diſtinguiſhes the countenance of the Perſon who wears it; which however little attended to, is one of the moſt important articles in the Compoſition of Dreſs, and which is never obſerved or violated without either increaſing or diminiſhing the Beauty of the Perſon it diſtinguiſhes. As the general Beauty of Dreſs depends upon the predominant Colour being diſtinguiſhed by ſome pleaſing or intereſting Expreſſion; ſo the Beauty of Dreſs in any particular ſituation or character, depends upon this Expreſſion being ſuited to that character or ſituation.

3. No Dreſs is ever conſidered as beautiful, in which the Compoſition of the inferior Colours is not adapted to the peculiar Expreſſion of the prevailing Colour. The mere accumulation of different Colours, without any regard to the general Colour of the Dreſs, every one knows to be proverbially expreſſive of ignorance and vulgarity. To ſuit theſe Colours, on the other hand, to the prevailing Colour, is conſidered as the great criterion of Taſte in this kind of Compoſition. If you enquire, accordingly, why in any particular caſe, ſuch Colours are not ſuited to the Dreſs, you will be told, that they are either too glaring, too ſolemn, too gay, or too delicate, for the predominant Colour; in other words, that they do not accord with the Expreſſion of the Dreſs, and

that on this account the Compoſition is not beautiful. Wherever in this article, it is ſaid, that Colours either ſuit, or do not ſuit, what is meant or felt, I believe, is, that their Expreſſions either agree, or do not agree.

It is upon the ſame account, that different Colours in Dreſs, admit of very different degrees of variety, in the Compoſition of the ſubordinate Colours. Rich Colours admit of little variety. Grave or melancholy Colours of leſs. Delicate Colours admit more of contraſt than of variety. Gay or cheerful Colours demand a great proportion of variety. In all theſe caſes, the proportion which is beautiful is that which accords with the peculiar nature of the Emotion, that the predominant Colour excites. Strong Emotions, and Emotions which border upon pain, require uniformity in their objects. Rich, or magnificent, or mournful Dreſſes, require therefore a great proportion of uniformity in the Compoſition of the colouring. Weak Emotions require to be ſupported and enlivened. Dreſſes of a gentle or delicate character are therefore beſt illuſtrated by contraſt. Emotions which belong to pleaſure, demand Variety in their objects. Dreſſes of a gay character, admit therefore of a greater proportion of Variety in their colouring, than any of the others.

Theſe ſlight hints (and the ſubject deſerves no more) may perhaps lead the Reader to conclude, that the Beauty of Dreſs (in ſo far as it relates to the Compoſition of Colours) depends upon the Unity of Expreſſion: and that Taſte, in this reſpect, conſiſts in the accurate perception of the

the Expreſſions of Colours, and of their relation both to each other, and to the character or ſituation of the perſon for whom they are deſtined.

There is one ſubject, in which ſome attention to theſe principles might perhaps be productive of no unimportant effect: I mean, in Dramatic Repreſentation. Every one has perceived the impropriety of the greater part of the Dreſſes which are ſeen upon the Stage. The confuſion of rich and tawdry, gay and grave Drapery, in the ſame performance; the neglect of every kind of correſpondence between the Dreſs, and the Character it diſtinguiſhes; Comedy and Tragedy clothed in the ſame Colours; and inſtead of any relation among the different Dreſſes of the ſame performance, or any correſpondence to the Character of that performance, each particular Dreſs at variance with another, and all of them left to be determined by the caprice or vanity of the Actor. If inſtead of this, we were to find in each diſtinguiſhing Character, ſome agreement between the Expreſſion of the Dreſs, and the nature of that Character; if different Ages, and Profeſſions, and Situations, were attired with the ſame regard to propriety that we expect in real life; if the whole of the Dreſſes in every particular performance had ſome relation to the Character of that performance, and to the Emotion it is deſtined to excite in our minds; if no greater degree of Variety was admitted in this reſpect, than was conſiſtent with this unity of Expreſſion; and if the whole were ſo imagined, as to compoſe a beautiful maſs or group

of colouring, in thoſe ſcenes where any number of perſonages were aſſembled together, ſome addition, I conceive, would be given to the effect of an Art, which has the capacity, at leaſt, of becoming one of the moſt powerful means we know, both of ſtrengthening Virtue, and of communicating Knowledge.

Whether the principle which I have now explained, may not extend to what is called the Harmony of Colouring in Hiſtorical Painting; whether the Beauty of the prevailing Colour is not dependent upon the agreement of its Expreſſion, with that peculiar Expreſſion or Character which diſtinguiſhes the ſcene; and whether the Beauty of the Compoſition of the ſubordinate Colours is not determined by its effect in preſerving this unity of Expreſſion, I ſhall leave to be determined by thoſe who are more learned in the Art, and better acquainted with Inſtances by which the truth of the obſervation may be tried.

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SECTION II.

Of the RELATIVE BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

BESIDES thoſe qualities of which Forms in themſelves are expreſſive to us, and which conſtitute what I have called their NATURAL Beauty, there are other qualities of which they are the Signs, from their being the ſubjects of Art, or produced by Wiſdom or Deſign, for ſome end. Whatever is the effect of Art, naturally leads us to the conſideration of that Art which is its cauſe, and of that end or purpoſe for which it was produced. When we diſcover ſkill or wiſdom in the one, or uſefulneſs or propriety in the other, we are conſcious of a very pleaſing Emotion; and the Forms which we have found by experience to be aſſociated with ſuch qualities, become naturally and neceſſarily expreſſive of them, and affect us with the Emotions which properly belong to the qualities they ſignify. There is therefore an additional ſource of Beauty in Forms, from the Expreſſion of ſuch qualities; which, for the ſake of perſpicuity, I ſhall beg leave to call their RELATIVE Beauty.

Every work of Deſign may be conſidered in one or other of the following lights: Either in relation to the Art or Deſign which produced it,

it,—to the nature of its conſtruction, for the purpoſe or end intended,—or to the nature of the end which it is thus deſtined to ſerve; and its Beauty accordingly depends, either upon the excellence or wiſdom of this Deſign, upon the Fitneſs or propriety of this conſtruction, or upon the Utility of this end. The conſiderations of Deſign, of Fitneſs, and of Utility, therefore, may be conſidered as the three great ſources of the Relative Beauty of Forms. In many caſes, this Beauty ariſes from all theſe Expreſſions together; but it may be uſeful to conſider them ſeparately, and to remark the peculiar influence of each, upon the Beauty of Forms.

PART

PART I.

Of the INFLUENCE *of* DESIGN *upon the* BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

I.

That the quality of Deſign is in many caſes productive of the Emotion of Beauty, ſeems to me too obvious to require any illuſtration. The Beauty of Deſign in a Poem, in a Painting, in a muſical Compoſition, or in a Machine, are Expreſſions which perpetually occur both in books, and in converſation, and which ſufficiently indicate the cauſe or ſource of the Emotion.

Wherever we diſcover Fitneſs or Utility, we infer the exiſtence of Deſign. In thoſe Forms, accordingly, which are diſtinguiſhed by ſuch qualities, the diſcovery of an end immediately ſuggeſts to us the belief of Intention or Deſign; and the ſame material qualities of Form, which ſignify to us this Fitneſs or Uſefulneſs, are the Signs to us alſo of the Deſign or Thought which produced them.

It is obvious, however, that we often perceive the Expreſſion of Deſign in Forms, both

in Art and Nature, in which we diſcover neither Fitneſs nor Utility. By what means then do we infer the exiſtence of Deſign in ſuch caſes; and are there any qualities of Form, which are in themſelves expreſſive to us of Deſign and Intention? I apprehend that there are; that there are certain qualities of Form which are immediately and permanently expreſſive to us of theſe qualities of Mind, and which derive their Beauty from this Expreſſion.

1. In this view, it will eaſily be obſerved, that the material quality which is moſt naturally and moſt powerfully expreſſive to us of Deſign, is UNIFORMITY or REGULARITY. Wherever, in any Form, we obſerve this quality, we immediately infer Deſign. In every Form, on the contrary, where we diſcover a total want of this quality, we are diſpoſed to conſider it as the production of Chance, or of ſome Power, which has operated without Thought or Intention. "In all caſes (ſays Dr. Reid) Regularity expreſ-"ſes Deſign and Art; for nothing regular was "ever the work of Chance." In what manner this connection is formed, whether it is derived from experience, or to be conſidered as an original principle of our nature, I do not enquire. It is, however, very obvious in children, at a very early age; and it may be obſerved, that the popular ſuperſtitions of all nations are in a great meaſure founded upon it; and that all uniform or regular appearances in Nature are referred by them, to ſome intelligent mind.

The terms Regularity and Uniformity are uſed ſo ſynonymouſly, that it is difficult to explain their difference. As far as I am able to judge, the

the following account of this difference is not very diſtant from the truth.

With regard to both terms, when applied to Forms, two things are obſervable. 1*ſt*, That they are only applied to ſuch objects as compoſe a whole; and that they expreſs a relation either between the parts of it conſidered ſeparately, or among the parts conſidered as conſtituting the whole. The relations between different wholes, or the parts of different wholes, are expreſſed by other terms. 2*dly*, That they expreſs always ſimilarity or reſemblance of parts. With regard to Uniformity, the term itſelf is an evidence of it; Uniformity being nothing but ſimilarity of Form. With regard to Regularity, it is not leſs evident. A regular Form, is a Form where all the parts are ſimilar: an irregular Form, is a Form where all the parts are diſſimilar. A Form, partly regular and partly irregular, is a Form where ſome parts are ſimilar, and others diſſimilar. This is, I conceive, the literal meaning of Regularity, as applied to Forms, and what we always mean by it, when applied to natural objects. There is, however, another meaning of the term, when applied to works of Art, viz. the Imitation of a Model. Thus, we ſay, that a Pillar is regular, that a Poem is regular, that any Compoſition is regular, when they have the ſame proportions, and the ſame parts, which are found in the model, or preſcribed by the rule. In this caſe, it is ſtill the ſimilarity of parts which conſtitutes Regularity; the ſimilarity between all the parts in the Copy, and thoſe in the original from which it is borrowed.

Conſidering

Conſidering then Regularity and Uniformity as both expreſſing ſimilarity of parts in a whole, it is plain, that we may conſider every Form compoſed of parts, either in relation to the ſimilarity of individual parts, or in relation to the ſimilarity of the whole parts. In the firſt caſe, the reſemblance of any two or more parts conſtitutes its Uniformity. In the ſecond, the reſemblance or ſimilarity of all the parts conſtitutes its regularity. Thus, we ſay that any two ſides of a Priſm are uniform, but that the Priſm itſelf is a regular Figure; that the ſides of a Cube are uniform, but the Cube itſelf is regular; that the ſides of many of the different Cryſtals are uniform, but that the Cryſtals themſelves are regular Solids.

In this view, both Uniformity and Regularity are conſtituted by ſimilarity of parts; and the difference between them is, That Uniformity expreſſes the ſimilarity of parts conſidered ſeparately, and Regularity the ſimilarity of parts as conſtituting the whole. There may therefore be Uniformity without Regularity, becauſe there may be a ſimilarity between any two or more parts of a Form, without a general ſimilarity among the whole; but there cannot be Regularity without Uniformity, or without this general reſemblance of the whole parts to each other.

Whatever may be the truth of this explanation, it ſeems ſufficiently obvious, that both theſe qualities are naturally expreſſive to us of Deſign, and that from the appearance of the one,

one, we are diſpoſed to infer the exertion of the other.

I believe alſo it will be found, that the Beauty of ſuch qualities in Forms, ariſes from this Expreſſion of deſign, and that they are not beautiful in themſelves, independent of this Expreſſion.

1. Whenever we know that ſuch appearances in Nature are the effect of chance, or ſeem to have been produced without any deſign, they are not beautiful. Of this every one muſt have had many inſtances in his own experience. We often meet with Vegetable productions, which aſſume perfectly regular Forms, and which approach to a reſemblance to Animals. However exact ſuch a reſemblance may be, or however regular the Form, we never conſider ſuch productions as beautiful. We ſay only that they are curious: we run to ſee them as Novelties, but we never ſpeak of their Beauty, or feel from them that Emotion of delight which Beauty excites. In many Stones, in the ſame manner, we often find reſemblances to Vegetables, to Animals, and to the human Countenance. We never ſay, however, that ſuch inſtances are beautiful, but that they are curious. The appearance of Regularity or Uniformity in Rocks or Mountains, or in any of the ingredients of Natural Scenery, is every where conſidered as a defect, inſtead of a Beauty, and is beheld with no other Emotion than that of ſurpriſe. If Uniformity or Regularity were beautiful in themſelves, it is obvious, that ſuch productions of

chance

chance would be equally beautiful with thoſe that are produced by deſign.

2. It is obvious, that Uniformity is not in every caſe equally beautiful, and that this Beauty is in all caſes proportioned to the difficulty of its attainment, or to the more forcible Expreſſion of Deſign or Skill. In ſimple Forms, or ſuch as are conſtituted by Lines of one kind, Uniformity is beautiful but in a very ſmall degree. Increaſe the number of Parts, and its Beauty increaſes in proportion to their Number. We are not much ſtruck with the Uniformity of two Leaves of a Tree. The Uniformity of the whole number of Leaves is a very beautiful conſideration. The Uniformity of theſe minute parts in every individual of the claſs, in every Tree of the ſame kind in Nature, is a conſideration of ſtill greater effect, and can ſcarcely be preſented to the Mind, without awakening a very powerful conviction of Wiſdom and Deſign. It is upon this principle, chiefly, I apprehend, that we determine the Beauty of Mathematical Figures, when we conder them ſimply as Figures, without relation either to their connection with Science, or with any of the productions of Art. An Equilateral Triangle is more beautiful than a Scalene or an Iſoſceles, a Square than a Rhombus, an Hexagon than a Square, an Ellipſe than a Parabola, a Circle than an Ellipſe; becauſe the number of their uniform parts are greater, and their Expreſſion of Deſign more complete. In general, in this ſubject, Regular Figures are more beautiful than Irregular, and Regular Figures of a greater number of parts more beautiful than the

the ſame figures of a ſmaller number of parts; they ceaſe only to be beautiful when the number of their parts is ſo great as to produce confuſion, and of conſequence to obſcure the Expreſſion of Deſign. It is the ſame principle which ſeems to produce the Beauty of INTRICACY. Nothing is more delightful, than in any ſubject where we at firſt perceived only confuſion, to find regularity gradually emerging, and to diſcover amid the apparent chaos, ſome uniform principle which reconciles the whole. To reduce a number of apparently diſſimilar particulars, under one general law of reſemblance, as it is one of the ſtrongeſt evidences of the exertion of Wiſdom and Deſign, ſo it is alſo productive of one of the ſtrongeſt Emotions of Beauty, which Deſign can excite.

II.

The view which I have now given of the Beauty of Regularity and Uniformity, as ariſing from the Expreſſion of Deſign, ſeems alſo very ſufficiently to account for a fact, which every one that is converſant in the hiſtory of the fine Arts muſt have obſerved: I mean the univerſal prevalence of Uniformity in the earlier periods of theſe Arts: and perhaps a general view of the progreſs of Taſte in this reſpect, is the beſt method by which I can explain the influence of Deſign upon the Beauty of Forms.

1. In the infancy of Society, when Art was firſt cultivated, and the attention of Men firſt directed to Works of Deſign, it is natural to imagine, that ſuch Forms would be employed in thoſe Arts which were intended to pleaſe, as were moſt ſtrongly expreſſive of Deſign or Skill. This would take place from two cauſes, *1ſt*, From their ignorance of thoſe more intereſting qualities which ſuch productions might expreſs, and which the gradual advancement of the Arts alone could unfold; and, *2dly*, From the peculiar value which Deſign or Art itſelf, in ſuch periods, poſſeſſed, and the conſequent admiration which it raiſed. When any Art was diſcovered among a rude People, the circumſtance that would moſt ſtrongly affect them, would be the Art itſelf, and the Deſign or Skill which it exhibited: the real capacities or conſequences of the Art, they muſt altogether be ignorant of. What the Artiſt would value himſelf upon, would be the production of a Work of Skill. What the Spectator would admire, would be the Invention or Ingenuity of the Workman who was capable of imagining and executing ſuch a Work. What the Workman, therefore, would ſtudy, would be to give his Work as full and complete an Expreſſion of this Skill or Deſign as he could. He would naturally, therefore, give it the appearance of perfect Uniformity. In proportion as it had this appearance, it would more or leſs teſtify the exertion of his Skill, and of conſequence more or leſs excite the admiration of the Spectator. The circumſtance of Art itſelf, would thus naturally prevail over every other Expreſſion of Form; and the value as well as the uncommonneſs of ſuch talents would give to Uniformity

formity a degree of Beauty, which it is perhaps difficult for thoſe to imagine, who are accuſtomed to the advancement of the Arts in a poliſhed Age. How naturally all this would take place, may ſtill, however, be ſeen in the Taſtes and opinions of Children. What they perpetually admire is Uniformity and Regularity. The firſt little eſſays they make in Art, are all diſtinguiſhed by this Character; the opinion they form of the Value or Beauty of any object that is ſhewn to them, is from the prevalence of Uniformity in its Compoſition; and the triumph which they diſplay, when they are able to produce any kind of Regularity in their little productions, very ſufficiently indicates the connection that ſubſiſts in their Minds, between ſuch Qualities and the Expreſſion of Deſign.

In the earlier periods of Society, therefore, it ſeems reaſonable to imagine, that all thoſe Arts which were directed only to Ornament, or to the production of Beauty, ſhould employ, in preference to all others, the admired Form; and that the Artiſt ſhould attempt to give to every thing that conſtituted the fine Arts of ſuch an Age, that Uniformity, which was expreſſive of the Quality moſt valued, and moſt admired among them. It is found accordingly, that this is the fact, and that the Form, which, in ſuch periods, univerſally characterizes the productions of Taſte is Uniformity or Regularity.

The firſt appearance of the Arts of Sculpture and Painting, has, in every country, been diſtinguiſhed by this character. The earlieſt attempts

tempts to imitate the human Form, could have little merit as an Imitation, and could be valued only for the ſkill and Dexterity they appeared, at ſuch a period, to exhibit. What the Spectator admired, was not ſo much the Reſemblance to Man, as the Invention and Art which produced this Reſemblance; what the Artiſt therefore would ſtudy, would be to make his work as expreſſive of this ſkill as poſſible. He could, however, do this in no way ſo ſurely, as by the production of Uniformity, by making choice of an attitude in which both ſides of the body were perfectly ſimilar, and every article of drapery, *&c.* upon the one ſide, having a correſpondent article of the ſame kind upon the other. Such a work, carried with it immediately the conviction of deſign, and would of courſe excite the admiration of an Age to which Deſign was not familiar. The figures of the Gods, and of the Heroes, of rude Nations, are accordingly repreſented by every Traveller, as faſhioned in this manner; and whoever will take the trouble of reading the Abbé Winkelman's laborious Hiſtory of Ancient Sculpture, will find that the earlieſt period even of Grecian Art, was diſtinguiſhed by the ſame Character.

As the favourite Form of ſuch an Age, would be Regularity, the firſt ſtep of the progreſs of the Art would naturally conſiſt in the greater perfection of this Form, in the higher finiſhing of the Parts, and in the increaſe of their Number. It is at this period that the Egyptian Sculpture ſeems to have ſtopped; the accuracy and the delicacy of its workmanſhip appear not

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to have been exceeded by any other People; but the poſſibility of adding Variety to Uniformity, or of copying the more graceful attitudes of the human Form, ſeems either to have been unknown or unattempted among them. From what cauſe this peculiarity aroſe, it is now difficult to explain; if it may not be conceived to have been the effect of a law of Religion, by which the Artiſts were forbidden to give any other appearance or attitude to the objects of their worſhip, than thoſe which were to be found in their ancient Sculptures. Every Hiſtory of Painting ſufficiently ſhews, that the firſt periods of this Art have been uniformly diſtinguiſhed by the ſame Character.

The Art of Gardening ſeems to have been governed, and long governed by the ſame Principle. When Men firſt began to conſider a Garden as a ſubject capable of Beauty, or of beſtowing any diſtinction upon its poſſeſſor, it was natural that they ſhould endeavour to render its Form as different as poſſible from that of the country around it; and to mark to the Spectator, as ſtrongly as they could, both the deſign and the labour which they had beſtowed upon it. Irregular Forms, however convenient or agreeable, might ſtill be the production of Nature; but Forms perfectly regular, and Diviſions completely uniform, immediately excited the belief of Deſign, and with this belief, all the admiration which follows the employment of Skill, or even of Expence. That this Principle would naturally lead the firſt Artiſts in Gardening to the production of Uniformity, may eaſily be

conceived, as even at preſent, when ſo different a ſyſtem of Gardening prevails, the common People univerſally follow the firſt Syſtem; and even the Men of the beſt Taſte, in the cultivation of waſte or neglected lands, ſtill incloſe them by uniform Lines, and in regular Diviſions, as more immediately ſignifying what they wiſh ſhould be ſignified, their Induſtry or Spirit in their improvement.

As gardens, however, are both a coſtly and permanent ſubject, and are of conſequence leſs liable to the influence of Faſhion, this Taſte would not eaſily be altered; and the principal improvements which they would receive, would conſiſt rather in the greater employment of uniformity and expence, than in the introduction of any new Deſign. The whole Hiſtory of Antiquity, accordingly, contains not, I believe, a ſingle inſtance where this character was deviated from, in a ſpot conſidered ſolely as a garden; and till within this century, and in this country, it ſeems not any where to have been imagined, that a garden was capable of any other Beauty, than what might ariſe from Utility, and from the diſplay of Art and Deſign. It deſerves alſo further to be remarked, that the additional ornaments of gardening, have in every country partaken of the ſame character, and have been directed to the purpoſe of increaſing the appearance and the Beauty of Deſign. Hence Jet d'Eaus, artificial Fountains, regular Caſcades, Trees in the form of Animals, *&c.* have in all countries been the principal ornaments of gardening. The violation of the uſual appearances of Nature in ſuch objects, ſtrongly exhibited the employment of Art. They accorded

accorded perfectly, therefore, with the character which the ſcene was intended to have; and they increaſed its Beauty, as they increaſed the effect of that quality upon which this Beauty was founded.

The ſame principle which has thus influenced the Taſte of men in the earlier periods of Society, with regard to Sculpture and Gardening, appears to have extended to every other Art which was employed in the Beauty of Form. The Art of Dancing, one of the Fine Arts of a rude people, and which is capable indeed of being one of the Fine Arts of the moſt improved people, is diſtinguiſhed in its firſt periods by the ſame character, and from the ſame cauſe. The common or general motions of the human body are acquired in ſo early infancy, and are performed with ſo little reflection, that they appear to be more the exertion of a natural power, than the acquiſition of labour or art. When men then firſt began to take pleaſure in the exertion of their agility, and to expect praiſe or admiration for their ſkill, it is obvious, that the motions and geſtures which they would adopt, would be ſuch as were fartheſt removed from the natural or eaſy motions of the body, and which from this difference were moſt ſtrongly expreſſive of the addreſs or agility of the Dancer. Hence naturally aroſe the invention of all thoſe uniform attitudes, in which the two ſides of the body were rendered perfectly correſpondent; thoſe artificial geſtures, in which the ſame motion of the limbs is repeated, without any change of place: and as the art advanced, thoſe regular figures in which the ſame Form is per-

petually deſcribed; and thoſe more complicated dances, in which a number of performers are engaged in repeating ſome intricate figure within a definite interval. Such geſtures and figures as eſſentially different from the uſual geſtures of the body, were immediately expreſſive both of Deſign and of Skill. The performer would ſtudy to excel in them. The ſpectator would admire him in proportion as he did excel; and hence the Art would almoſt neceſſarily aſſume the ſame character of Regularity or Uniformity that diſtinguiſhed the other Arts which were deſtined to pleaſe.

It would be very eaſy to illuſtrate the ſame obſervation, from a variety of other particulars in the ornamental Forms of rude nations, if it did not lead to a very minute, and I believe a very unneceſſary inveſtigation. The Reader will perhaps forgive me, if I avail myſelf of this opportunity to hazard a conjecture, whether the ſame principle is not the cauſe of the invention of Rhyme and Meaſure in Poetry, and whether it may not ſerve to account for a very remarkable fact that every one is acquainted with, *viz.* The Precedence of Poetical, to Proſaic Compoſition.

The uſe of language is acquired ſo early in life, and is practiſed upon common occaſions with ſo little ſtudy or thought, that it appears to a rude people, as it does to the common people of every country, rather as an inherent power of our nature, than as an acquiſition of labour or ſtudy; and upon ſuch occaſions, is conſidered as no more expreſſive of Deſign or Skill, than the notes of birds, or the cries of animals. When therefore

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men firſt began to think of Compoſition, and to expect admiration from their ſkill in it, they would very naturally endeavour to make it as expreſſive as they could of this Skill, by diſtinguiſhing it as much as poſſible from common language. There was no way ſo obvious for this, as by the production of ſome kind of Regularity or Uniformity; by the production either of Regularity in the ſucceſſion of theſe Sounds, or of Uniformity or Reſemblance in the Sounds themſelves. Such qualities in Compoſition would immediately ſuggeſt the belief of Skill and Deſign, and would of conſequence excite all that admiration which, in the commencement of every Art, ſuch qualities ſo ſtrongly and ſo juſtly raiſe. The ſame cauſe, therefore, which induced the Sculptor to give to his performances that Form, which was moſt ſtrongly expreſſive of his ſkill, would induce the Poet to employ that Regularity or Uniformity of Sounds, which was moſt immediately expreſſive alſo of his Skill, and which was moſt likely to excite the admiration of his people. Rhyme or Meaſure then (according to the nature of the language, and the ſuperior difficulty of either) would naturally come to be the conſtituent mark of Poetry, or of that ſpecies of Compoſition which was deſtined to affect or to pleaſe. It would be the ſimpleſt reſource which the Poet could fall upon, to diſtinguiſh his productions from common language; and it would accordingly pleaſe, juſt in proportion to the perfection of its Regularity, or to the degree in which it was expreſſive of his labour and ſkill. The greater and more important characteriſtics of the Art, a rude people muſt neceſſarily be unacquainted

quainted with; and what would naturally conſtitute the diſtinction to them between Poetry and common language, would be the appearance of Uniformity or Regularity in the one, and the want of them in the other.

As thus, the firſt inſtances of Compoſition would be diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſpecies of Uniformity, every kind of Compoſition would gradually borrow, or come to be diſtinguiſhed by the ſame character. If it was neceſſary for the Poet to ſtudy Rhyme or Meaſure, to diſtinguiſh his verſes from common language, it would be equally neceſſary for the Lawgiver to ſtudy the ſame in the Compoſition of his Laws, and the Sage in the Compoſition of his Aphoriſms. Without this character, they had no diſtinction from uſual or familiar Expreſſion; they had no mark by which they might be known to be the fruit of Thought or Reflection, inſtead of the immediate effuſion of Fancy. Before the invention of writing, the only expedient by which it ſeems poſſible that Compoſition could be diſtinguiſhed from common language, muſt have been ſome ſpecies of Uniformity or Regularity, which might immediately convey the belief of Art or Deſign, and thus ſeparate it from that vulgar language, which appeared to imply neither. It is hence, that in every country, proverbs, or the ancient maxims of wiſdom, are diſtinguiſhed by Alliteration, or Meaſure, or ſome other artifice of a like nature; that in many countries the earlieſt laws have been written in verſe; and, in general, that the artificial Compoſition which is now appropriated to Poetry alone, and diſtinguiſhed by the name of Poetical

Poetical Compoſition, was naturally the prevailing character of Compoſition, and applied to every ſubject which was the fruit of labour or meditation; as the mark, and indeed the only mark that then could be given, of the employment of this labour and meditation.

The invention of writing occaſioned a very great revolution in Compoſition. What was written, was of itſelf expreſſive of Deſign. Proſe therefore, when written, was equally expreſſive of Deſign with Verſe or Rhyme; and the reſtraints which theſe impoſed, led men naturally to forſake that artificial Compoſition, which now no longer had the value it bore, before this invention. The diſcovery of writing, ſeems therefore naturally to have led to Compoſition in Proſe. It might be expected alſo, that the ſame cauſe ſhould have freed Poetry from the reſtraints with which the ignorance or the neceſſities of a rude Age had thus ſhackled it; and that the great diſtinctions of Imagery, of Enthuſiaſm, of being directed to the Imagination, inſtead of the Underſtanding, *&c.* ſhould have been ſufficient diſtinctions of it from proſaic Compoſition, without preſerving thoſe rude inventions, which were founded ſolely upon the Expreſſion of Art. There are, however, two cauſes which ſerve to prevent this natural effect, and which it is probable will every where continue to appropriate Rhyme or Meaſure, to poetical Compoſition. *1ſt*, The permanence of poetical Models, and the irreſiſtible prejudice we have in their favour, even from no other cauſe than their antiquity: and, *2dly*, The real difficulty of the Art itſelf, which in oppoſition

poſition to the general hiſtory of Art, remains ſtill as difficult, and perhaps more ſo, than in the firſt periods of its cultivation; and which of conſequence renders it ſtill as much the object of admiration, as when it firſt began to be cultivated. The generality of men judge of Poetry by the perfection or imperfection of its Rhymes; and the art or ſkill of the Poet in the management of them, conſtitutes a very great ſhare of the pleaſure they have in the peruſal of it.

Whatever truth there may be in this conjecture, with regard to the Origin of Rhyme and Meaſure, it is a fact ſufficiently certain, that the firſt periods of the hiſtory of the Fine Arts, are diſtinguiſhed by Uniformity and Regularity; and perhaps the obſervations which I have offered may lead the Reader to believe, that this ariſes from the early, and perhaps inſtinctive aſſociation we have of ſuch qualities in Form, with Deſign and Skill, and the great and peculiar value they neceſſarily have in ſuch a period of ſociety.

2. When, however, the Fine Arts have made this progreſs, circumſtances ariſe which alter in a great meaſure the Taſte of mankind, and introduce a different opinion with regard to the Beauty of Deſign. Two cauſes more eſpecially conſpire to this. 1*ſt*, The diſcovery that is gradually made, that other and more affecting qualities are capable of being expreſſed by Forms, than that of mere Deſign: and, 2*dly*, The progreſs of the Arts themſelves, which naturally renders eaſy, what at firſt was difficult, and of conſequence, renders the production of Regularity

rity or Uniformity leſs forcibly the ſign of Skill than at firſt. Both tend immediately to the introduction of VARIETY.

When the Painter and Sculptor, for inſtance, had advanced ſo far in their Art, as to be able to imitate exactly the Form of the human Body, it could not well be long before they applied themſelves to particular imitations of it. Some Forms are beautiful, others not. They would ſtudy therefore to imitate the former; and perhaps endeavour to inveſtigate what circumſtances conſtituted the difference between ſuch caſes. The imitation of the beautiful, from the imitation of mere Form, was itſelf a great ſtep in the Art, but was of ſtill greater conſequence in leading to another. Beautiful Forms were more beautiful in one attitude than in another, under the influence of ſome paſſions or affections, than under the influence of others. To imitate ſuch objects, therefore, it was neceſſary to ſtudy, not only the general Beauty of Form, but ſuch Attitudes and Expreſſions, as were the ſigns of ſuch Paſſions or Affections. The moſt beautiful Forms in real Life, were ſtill in ſome reſpects deficient, and it was difficult to find inſtances, where ſuch Forms might diſplay the moſt beautiful Attitudes or Expreſſions. The imagination of the Painter or the Sculptor, could alone ſupply this want: he would endeavour by degrees, therefore, to unite the Beauty of Form, with the Beauty of Expreſſion; and would thus gradually aſcend to the conception of Ideal Beauty, and to the production of Form and of Attitude, more beautiful than any that were to be found in Nature itſelf. In theſe various

ous ſteps, the Uniformity of the earlier Ages would inſenſibly be deſerted. Beautiful Attitudes have little Uniformity, and in the Expreſſion of Paſſion or Affection, every Variety of Form muſt be introduced which takes place in real Life. The Artiſt, therefore, would not only be under the neceſſity of introducing Variety, but the admiration of the Spectator would neceſſarily keep pace with its Introduction; both becauſe the expreſſion which his Forms now aſſumed, was of itſelf much more pleaſing and intereſting, than the mere expreſſion of Deſign, and becauſe this Variety was in fact now ſignificant of greater Skill and Dexterity in the Artiſt, than the mere Uniformity of the former Age. In thoſe Arts, therefore, Variety of Form, would not only be conſidered as expreſſive of Deſign; but as what diſtinguiſhed the Old and the Modern School, was the Uniformity of the one, and the Variety of the other, it would be conſidered as the peculiar ſign of elegant or of improved Deſign.

In all the other Arts, which were either directed to the production of Beauty of Form, or which were ſuſceptible of it, the ſame cauſes would produce the ſame effect. In all of them, in proportion as the Art was cultivated, the difficulty of it would decreaſe; the ſame Form which was beautiful and ſolely beautiful, when the circumſtance of Art or Skill only was conſidered, would every day become leſs beautiful as that Skill became more common:—the natural rivalſhip of Artiſts would lead them to deviate from this principle of Uniformity, and by the introduction of ſome degree of Variety, to give greater

greater proofs of their Art and Dexterity:—it would not fail to be obſerved, that in ſuch inventions ſome were more beautiful or more pleaſing than others: ſome farther qualities, therefore, would be ſought for in the Forms, than that which was merely expreſſive of Deſign: the Forms which were beautiful in Nature, would be imitated in the productions of Art; ſucceeding Ages would gradually refine upon theſe beginnings of Improvement; until, at laſt, the moſt common Forms would receive all that degree of Beauty, which was conſiſtent with their uſefulneſs or ends.

The Forms, however, that are beautiful in Nature, are, in general, ſuch as are diſtinguiſhed by Variety. In the imitation of them, Variety would neceſſarily be introduced. The imitation of ſuch Forms, the application of them to common objects, was, in itſelf, more laborious, more difficult, and demanded more ſkill in the Artiſt, than the production of mere Uniformity. The Variety, therefore, which took place in this period of the Arts, would naturally become the ſign of improved or of elegant Deſign, as Uniformity had formerly been the ſign of Deſign itſelf; and as the one diſtinguiſhed the rude period of theſe Arts, and the other the improved and elegant one, Uniformity in this, as in the former caſe, would come to be conſidered as the ſign of rude or imperfect Deſign, and Variety, of that which was refined and cultivated. The application of theſe principles to the different Arts, which are converſant in the Beauty of Form, is far beyond the limit of theſe obſervations.

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By ſuch means as theſe, by the imitation of Nature, by the invention which rivalſhip would naturally excite, and by the natural progreſs of Art itſelf, Variety would gradually be introduced; in different degrees indeed in different Arts, according to their nature, and the coſtlineſs and permanence of the ſubjects upon which they were employed, but ſtill in all in ſome degree, and according to the meaſure in which they admitted of it. As it thus alſo became the principal viſible diſtinction between the rude and the improved ſtate of theſe Arts, it would become the ſign of this improvement and refinement; the excellence of the Artiſt, would, in a great degree, be meaſured by the proportion of it which he was capable of giving to his works; and as the love of Uniformity had diſtinguiſhed the earlier periods of Society, the love of Variety would from the ſame cauſe, diſtinguiſh the periods of cultivation and refinement. It is found accordingly, that this is the great characteriſtic of the taſte of poliſhed Ages: and ſo ſtrong is this principle, that wherever, in the Arts of any country, Variety is found to predominate, it may be ſafely inferred, that they have long been cultivated in that country; as, on the other hand, wherever the love of Uniformity prevails, it may with equal ſafety be inferred, that they are in that country but in the firſt ſtage of their improvement.

There is one Art, however, in which the ſame effect ſeems to have ariſen from very different cauſes. The Variety which diſtinguiſhes the Modern Art of Gardening in this Iſland, beautiful as it undoubtedly is, appears not however, to

to be equally natural to this Art, as it has been ſhown to be to others. It is, at leaſt, of a very late origin: it is to be found in no other country: and thoſe nations of antiquity, who had carried the Arts of Taſte to the greateſt perfection which they have ever yet attained, while they had arrived at Beauty in every other ſpecies of Form, ſeem never to have imagined, that the principle of Variety was applicable to Gardening, or to have deviated in any reſpect from the Regularity or Uniformity of their anceſtors.

Nor does it indeed ſeem to be either a very natural or a very obvious invention. A Garden is a ſpot ſurrounding or contiguous to a houſe, and cultivated for the convenience or pleaſure of the family. When Men began firſt to ornament ſuch a ſpot, it was natural that they ſhould do with it, as they did with the houſe to which it was ſubordinate, viz. by giving it every poſſible appearance of Uniformity, to ſhew that they had beſtowed labour and expence upon the improvement of it. In the countries that were moſt proper for Gardening, in thoſe diſtinguiſhed by a fine climate and a beautiful ſcenery, this labour and expence could in fact in no other way be expreſſed than by the production of ſuch Uniformity. To imitate the Beauty of Nature in the ſmall ſcale of a Garden, would have been ridiculous in a country, where this Beauty was to be found upon the great ſcale of Nature; and for what purpoſe ſhould they beſtow labour or expence, for which every Man expects credit, in erecting a ſcene, which as it could be little

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ſuperior to the general ſcenery around them, could of conſequence but little communicate to the Spectator the belief of this labour or this expence having been beſtowed? The Beauty of Landſcape, Nature had ſufficiently provided. The Beauty, therefore, that was left for Man to create, was the Beauty of Convenience or Magnificence; both of them dependent upon the employment of Art and Expence, and both of them beſt expreſſed by ſuch Forms, as immediately ſignified the employment of ſuch means. In ſuch a ſituation, therefore, it does not ſeem natural, that Men ſhould think of proceeding in this Art beyond the firſt and earlieſt Forms, which it had acquired; or that any further improvement ſhould be attempted in it, than merely in the extenſion of the ſcale of this Deſign.

In this view, I cannot help thinking, that the Modern Taſte in Gardening, (or what Mr. Walpole very juſtly, and very emphatically calls the Art of creating Landſcape,) owes its origin to two circumſtances, which may at firſt appear paradoxical, viz. To the accidental circumſtance of our taſte in Natural Beauty being founded upon foreign models; and to the difference or inferiority of the ſcenery of our own country, to that which we were accuſtomed peculiarly to admire.

The influence of theſe circumſtances will be perhaps ſufficiently obvious to thoſe who recollect, that the Compoſitions which ſerve moſt early, and indeed moſt univerſally, to fix our Taſte

Taſte in this reſpect, are thoſe which have been produced in Italy and Greece; in countries much ſuperior to our own, in the articles of climate and of natural Beauty; which are almoſt ſacred in our imaginations, from the events by which they have been diſtinguiſhed, and which, beſides all this, have an additional charm to us, from the very Compoſitions in which they are celebrated. The poems of Homer and Theocritus, of Virgil and Horace, have been now for a conſiderable length of time, the firſt poetical Compoſitions to which the youth of modern Europe are accuſtomed; and they have influenced accordingly, in a very ſenſible degree, the Taſte of all thoſe who have been ſo early engaged in the ſtudy of them. Beſides this, the effect of Painting, and particularly of Landſcape Painting, has been very great, both in awakening our Taſte to natural Beauty, and in determining it. The great maſters in this Art have been principally Italians: men who were born amid ſcenes of diſtinguiſhed Beauty, who paſſed their lives in copying thoſe features either of real or of adventitious Expreſſion with which Italy preſented them; and whoſe works have diſſeminated in every country where they found their way, the admiration of the ſcenes which they copied. From both theſe cauſes, and from the ſtrong prejudice, which, ſince the revival of letters, we ſo early and ſo deeply feel, in favour of every thing that relates to Grecian or to Roman Antiquity, the Imagery of Italian Scenery had got ſtrongly the poſſeſſion of our imagination. Our firſt impreſſions of the Beauty of Nature, had been gained from the Compoſitions which delineated

neated ſuch ſcenery; and we were gradually accuſtomed to conſider them as the ſtandard of Natural Beauty.

With theſe impreſſions, it was very natural for the inhabitants of a country, of which the ſcenery, however beautiful in itſelf, was yet in many reſpects very different from that which they were accuſtomed to conſider as ſolely or ſupremely beautiful, to attempt to imitate what they did not poſſeſs; to import, as it were, the beauties which were not of their own growth; and in fact to create, according to Mr. Walpole's vigorous expreſſion, that ſcenery which Nature and Fortune had denied them.

Such improvements, however, as extremely expenſive, could not be at firſt upon a very large ſcale. They could, for various reaſons, occupy only that ſpot of ground which ſurrounded the houſe; and as they thus ſupplanted what had formerly been the garden, they came very naturally to be conſidered only as another ſpecies of gardening. A ſcene of ſo peculiar a kind, could not well unite with the country around. It would gradually therefore extend, ſo as to embrace all the ground that was within view, or in the poſſeſſion of the improver. From the garden, therefore, it naturally extended to the park, which became therefore alſo the ſubject of this new, but very fortunate mode of improvement: And thus, from the nature of modern education, and the habit we are in of receiving our firſt rudiments of Taſte from foreign models, together with the admiration which

which ſo many cauſes have conſpired to excite in our minds with regard to antiquity, ſeems very probably to have ariſen that modern Taſte in Gardening, which is ſo different from every other that men have followed, and which has tended ſo much to the ornament of this country.

It is to be obſerved alſo, in confirmation of what I have ſaid, that the firſt attempts of this kind in England, were very far from being an imitation of the general ſcenery of Nature. It was ſolely the imitation of Italian ſcenery; and it is not improbable, that they who firſt practiſed the Art, were themſelves ignorant of the poſſible Beauties which it at length might acquire. Statues, Temples, Urns, Ruins, Colonades, *&c.* were the firſt ornaments of all ſuch ſcenes. Whatever diſtinguiſhed the real ſcenes of Nature in Italy, was here employed in artificial ſcenery, with the moſt thoughtleſs profuſion; and the object of the Art in general, was the creation not of Natural, but of Italian Landſcape. The fine Satire of Mr. Pope upon this ſubject, is a ſufficient proof of the degree to which this Faſhion was carried; and it deſerves to be remarked, to the honour of his Taſte, that he ſo ſoon ſaw the poſſible beauties of this infant Art, and was ſo ſuperior to the univerſal prejudices upon the ſubject.

It was but a ſhort ſtep, however, from this ſtate of the Art, to the purſuit of general Beauty. The great ſtep had already been made, in the deſtruction of the regular Forms which conſtituted

ſtituted the former ſyſtem of Gardening, and in the imitation of Nature, which, although foreign, and very different from the appearances or the character of Nature in our own country, was yet ſtill the imitation of Nature. The profuſion with which Temples, Ruins, Statues, and all the other adventitious articles of Italian ſcenery was laviſhed, became ſoon ridiculous. The deſtruction of theſe, it was found, did not deſtroy the Beauty of Landſcape. The power of ſimple Nature was felt and acknowledged, and the removal of the articles of acquired Expreſſion, led men only more ſtrongly to attend to the natural Expreſſion of ſcenery, and to ſtudy the means by which it might be maintained or improved. The publication alſo, at this time, of the Seaſons of Thomſon, in the opinion of a very competent judge *, contributed in no ſmall degree, both to influence and to direct the Taſte of men in this Art. The peculiar merit of the work itſelf, the ſingular felicity of its deſcriptions, and above all, the fine Enthuſiaſm which it diſplays, and which it is ſo fitted to excite, with regard to the works of Nature, were moſt ſingularly adapted to promote the growth of an infant Art, which had for its object the production of natural Beauty; and by diffuſing every where both the admiration of Nature, and the knowledge of its Expreſſion, prepared in a peculiar degree, the minds of men in general, both to feel the effects, and to judge of the fidelity, of thoſe ſcenes in which it was imitated. By theſe means, and by the ſingular genius of ſome late maſters, the Art of Gardening has gradually aſcended

* Dr. Warton.

aſcended from the purſuit of particular, to the purſuit of general Beauty; to realize whatever the fancy of the Painter has imagined, and to create a ſcenery, more pure, more harmonious, and more expreſſive, than any that is to be found in Nature itſelf.

From the ſlight view which I have now given of the progreſs of thoſe Arts, which reſpect the Beauty of Form, the Reader may perhaps be ſatisfied, that this progreſs itſelf produces a difference in the ſentiments of men, with regard to the Beauty of Deſign, and to thoſe material qualities in Forms, which are expreſſive of it; that the ſame degree of Art or Skill which is the object of admiration in an early age, ceaſes to be ſo, in an age of greater improvement; and that hence as UNIFORMITY is the diſtinguiſhing Form of Beauty in the firſt periods of theſe Arts, VARIETY is from the ſame cauſe, in the latter.

Theſe qualities, however, though in a great meaſure characteriſtic of the rude and improved periods of the Arts, are neither oppoſite nor irreconcileable. In every perfect Form of Beauty they muſt be united, and the ſame quality of Deſign or Skill which is the foundation of their Beauty, affords alſo the law of their union.

Every work of Art ſuppoſes Unity of Deſign, or ſome one end which the Artiſt had in view in its ſtructure or compoſition. In Forms, however, conſidered ſimply as expreſſive of Deſign,

and without any other relation, the only poſſible Sign of unity of Deſign, is Uniformity or Regularity. It is this which alone diſtinguiſhes the productions of Chance, from thoſe of Deſign; and without the appearance of this, Variety is confeſſedly only Confuſion.

In every beautiful work of Art, ſomething more than mere Deſign is demanded, viz. Elegant or embelliſhed Deſign. The only material Sign of this is Variety. It is this which diſtinguiſhes, in general, beautiful from plain Forms; and without this, in ſome degree, Uniformity is only dulneſs and inſipidity. Beautiful Forms, therefore, muſt neceſſarily be compoſed both of Uniformity and Variety; and this union will be perfect, when the proportion of Uniformity does not encroach upon the Beauty of Embelliſhment, and the proportion of Variety does not encroach upon the Beauty of Unity.

Conſidering, therefore, Forms in this light, as beautiful merely from their Expreſſion of Deſign, the obſervation of Dr. Hutcheſon may perhaps be conſidered as an Axiom with regard to their Beauty, viz. That where the Uniformity is equal, the Beauty of Forms is in proportion to their Variety; and when their Variety is equal, their Beauty is in proportion to their Uniformity; that is according to the view which I have now preſented to the Reader, When the Unity of Deſign is equal, the Beauty of Forms will be in proportion to their Embelliſhment; and when the Embelliſhment of Forms is equal, their

their Beauty will be in proportion to the Unity of their Deſign.

III.

In the view which I have now preſented to the Reader, the qualities of Uniformity and Variety are conſidered as beautiful from their Expreſſion of Deſign. In the preceding ſection, on the other hand, theſe qualities are conſidered as beautiful, from the effect of their Compoſition, in maintaining and promoting the Emotion which the ſubject itſelf is capable of exciting. That theſe qualities are in fact beautiful from both theſe cauſes; that their Compoſition is in ſome caſes beautiful from being expreſſive of the Skill and Taſte of the Artiſt; and in others, from being correſpondent to the Character or Expreſſion of the ſubject, are propoſitions ſo obvious, that I will not detain the Reader by any illuſtration of them. The confounding of theſe diſtinct Expreſſions, has alſo, I believe, been the cauſe of the greater part of the miſtakes which have been made in the inveſtigation of the Beauty of theſe qualities.

The Beauty of theſe Expreſſions, however, is very different; and as it is in the power of the Artiſt, either to ſacrifice the Beauty of Deſign to that of Character or Expreſſion, or to ſacrifice the Beauty of Character to that of Deſign, there is not perhaps any circumſtance of more importance to him, or to the Arts of Taſte in general, than a proper comprehenſion of the

difference

difference of this Beauty, and of the great ſuperiority which the one has over the other. The ſuperiority of the Beauty of Expreſſion or Character, ſeems to conſiſt in three things. 1*ſt*, In the greater and more affecting Emotion, which is produced by it, than what is produced by the mere expreſſion of Deſign. 2*dly*, In this Beauty being more univerſally felt, as being dependent only upon Senſibility, while the Beauty of Deſign is felt only fully by thoſe who are proficients in the Art, and who are able accordingly to judge of the Skill or Taſte which is diſplayed; and, 3*dly*, In the permanence of this Beauty, as ariſing from certain invariable principles of our Nature, while the Beauty of Deſign is dependent upon the period of the Art, in which it is diſplayed, and ceaſes to be beautiful, when the Art has made a farther progreſs either in improvement or decline. In all thoſe Arts therefore, that have for their object, the production of beautiful Forms, it may be conſidered as a firſt and fundamental principle, That the Expreſſion of Deſign ſhould be ſubject to the Expreſſion of Character; and that in every Form, the proportion of Uniformity and Variety, which the Artiſt ſhould ſtudy, ought to be that which is accommodated to the nature of this Character, and not to the Expreſſion of his own dexterity or Skill. As in the Mechanical Arts, whoſe object is utility, and in which the ability of the Artiſt is moſt ſurely diſplayed by the production of uſeful Form, it would be abſurd in him to ſacrifice this utility, to the diſplay of his own dexterity or addreſs: ſo in the Arts of Taſte, whoſe

object

object is Beauty, and in which the Taſte or Genius of the Artiſt is in like manner moſt ſurely diſplayed by the production of beautiful Form, it is equally abſurd to ſacrifice the ſuperior Beauty of Character or Expreſſion, to that meaner and leſs permanent Beauty, which may ariſe from the diſplay of his own ability or art.

However obvious or important the principle, which I have now ſtated may be, the fine Arts have been unfortunately governed by a very different principle; and the undue preference which Artiſts are naturally diſpoſed to give to the diſplay of Deſign, has been one of the moſt powerful cauſes of that decline and degeneracy which has uniformly marked the hiſtory of the fine Arts, after they have arrived at a certain period of perfection. To a common Spectator, the great teſt of excellence in beautiful Forms is Character or Expreſſion, or, in other words, the appearance of ſome intereſting or affecting quality in the Form itſelf. To the Artiſt, on the other hand, the great teſt of excellence is Skill; the production of ſomething new in point of Deſign, or difficult in point of Execution. It is by the Expreſſion of Character, therefore, that the generality of Men determine the Beauty of Forms. It is by the Expreſſion of Deſign, that the Artiſt determines it. When therefore, the Arts which are converſant in the Beauty of Form, have attained to that fortunate ſtage of their progreſs, when this Expreſſion of Character is itſelf the great Expreſſion of Deſign, the Invention and Taſte of the Artiſt, take, almoſt neceſ-

ſarily,

ſarily, a different direction. When his excellence can no longer be diſtinguiſhed by the production of merely beautiful or expreſſive Form, he is naturally led to diſtinguiſh it by the production of what is uncommon or difficult; to ſignalize his works by the fertility of his invention, or the dexterity of his execution; and thus gradually to forget the end of his art, in his attention to diſplay his ſuperiority in the Art itſelf. While the Artiſt thus inſenſibly deviates from the true principles of Compoſition, other cauſes unfortunately tend to miſlead alſo the Taſte of the Public. In the Mechanical Arts, whoſe object is Utility, this Utility is itſelf the principle by which we determine the perfection of every production: Utility, however, is a permanent principle, and neceſſarily renders our opinion of this perfection as permanent. In the Fine Arts, whoſe object is Beauty, it is by its effect upon our imagination alone, that we determine the excellence of any production. There is no quality, however, which has a more powerful effect upon our imagination than Novelty. The Taſte of the generality of mankind, therefore, very naturally falls in with the invention of the Artiſt, and is gratified by that continued production of Novelty which the Art affords to it. In the Mechanical Arts, which are directed to general utility, all men are in ſome meaſure judges of the excellence of their productions, becauſe they are in ſome meaſure judges of this Utility. But in the Fine Arts, which ſeem to require peculiar talents, and which require at leaſt talents that are not generally exerted, all men neither are, nor conceive themſelves to be judges. They willingly therefore

fore ſubmit their opinions to the guidance of thoſe, who, by their practice in theſe arts, appear very naturally the moſt competent to judge with regard to their Beauty; and while the Arts amuſe them with perpetual novelty, very readily take for granted, that what is new is alſo beautiful. By theſe means; by the preference which Artiſts are ſo naturally diſpoſed to give to the Expreſſion of Deſign, above the Expreſſion of Character; by the nature of theſe Arts themſelves, which afford no permanent principle of judging; and by the diſpoſition of men in general to ſubmit their opinions to the opinions of thoſe who have the ſtrongeſt propenſity, and the greateſt intereſt in their corruption, have the Arts of Taſte, in every country, after a certain period of perfection, degenerated into the mere Expreſſions of the Skill and Execution of the Artiſt, and gradually ſunk into a ſtate of barbarity, almoſt as great as that from which they at firſt aroſe. "Alit æmu-
" latio ingenia, (ſays Velleius Paterculus, in
" ſpeaking of the ſame ſubject), et nunc invidia,
" nunc admiratio incitationem accendit; natura-
" que quod ſummo ſtudio petitum eſt, adſcendit
" in ſummum difficiliſque in perfecto mora eſt:
" naturaliterque quod procedere non poteſt, rece-
" dit; et ut primo, ad conſequendos quos prio-
" res ducimus, accendimur, ita, ubi aut præteri-
" ri aut æquari eos poſſe deſperavimus, ſtudium
" cum ſpe ſeneſcit, et quod aſſequi non poteſt,
" ſequi deſinit; et velut occupatam relinquens
" materiam, quærit novam; præteritoque eo, in
" quo eminere non poſſumus, aliquid in quo ni-
" tamur conquirimus."

Vell. Patercul. L. 1. *ad fin.*

Nor

Nor is this melancholy progreſs peculiar to thoſe Arts which reſpect the Beauty of Form. The ſame cauſes extend to every other of thoſe Arts which are employed in the production of Beauty; and they who are acquainted with the Hiſtory of the Fine Arts of Antiquity, will recollect, that the Hiſtory of Statuary, of Painting, of Muſic, of Poetry, and of Proſe Compoſition have been alike diſtinguiſhed in their later periods, by the ſame gradual deſertion of the End of the Art, for the diſplay of the Art itſelf; and by the ſame prevalence of the Expreſſion of Deſign, over the Expreſſion of the Compoſition in which it was employed. It has been ſeldom found in the hiſtory of any of theſe Arts, that the Artiſt, like the great Maſter of Painting in this country, has united the Philoſophy with the practice of his Art, and regulated his own ſublime inventions, by the chaſte principles of Truth and Science.

For an error, which ſo immediately ariſes from the nature, and from the practice of theſe Arts themſelves, it is difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to find a remedy. Whether (as I am willing to believe) there may not be circumſtances in the modern ſtate of Europe, which may ſerve to check at leaſt, this unfortunate progreſſion; whether the beautiful Models of Antiquity in every Art, may not ſerve to fix in ſome degree the ſtandard of Taſte in theſe Arts; whether the progreſs of Philoſophy and Criticiſm may not tend to introduce greater ſtability, as well as greater delicacy of Taſte; and whether the general diffuſion of Science, by increaſing in ſo great a proportion the

the number of judges, may not reſcue theſe Arts from the ſole dominion of the Artiſts, and thus eſtabliſh more juſt and philoſophical principles of deciſion, it is far beyond the limits of theſe Eſſays to enquire. But I humbly conceive, that there is no rule of Criticiſm more important in itſelf, or more fitted to preſerve the Taſte of the Individual, or of the Public, than to conſider every Compoſition as faulty and defective, in which the Expreſſion of the Art is more ſtriking than the Expreſſion of the Subject, or in which the Beauty of Deſign prevails over the Beauty of Character or Expreſſion.

PART

PART II.

Of the INFLUENCE *of* FITNESS *upon the* BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

I.

The ſecond ſource of the relative Beauty of Forms is FITNESS, or the proper Adaption of Means to an End.

That this Quality in Forms is productive of the Emotion of Beauty, every one muſt probably have perceived. In the Forms of Furniture, of Machines, and of Inſtruments in the different Arts, the greater part of their Beauty ariſes from this conſideration; nor is there any Form which does not become beautiful, where it is found to be perfectly adapted to its End. "A ſhip which "is well built, and which promiſes to ſail well, "ſays Mr. Hogarth, is called by ſailors a "Beauty." In every other profeſſion in like manner, all Machines or inſtruments are called beautiful by the Artiſts, which are well adapted to the end of their Arts. Even the moſt common and diſregarded articles of convenience, are felt as beautiful, when we forget their familiarity, and conſider them only in relation to the purpoſes they ſerve.

That

That Fitneſs is not only the ſource of Beauty in Forms, is ſufficiently obvious. But I apprehend the elegant and ingenious Author of the ESSAY UPON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL, has yielded too much to the love of Syſtem, when he will not allow it to be any ſource of Beauty at all. The common experience and common language of mankind are at variance with this opinion, nor does it ſeem to be ſufficiently ſupported by any of the inſtances he brings. "On this principle (ſays he) the "wedge-like ſnout of the Swine, the little ſunk "eyes, and the whole make of the head, ſo well "adapted to its offices of digging and rooting, "would be extremely beautiful. The great bag "hanging to the bill of the Pelican, a thing like-"wiſe highly uſeful to this animal, would be "likewiſe as beautiful in our eyes. The Hedge-"hog, ſo well ſecured againſt all aſſaults by his "prickly hide, and the Porcupine, with his miſ-"ſile quills, would be then conſidered as creatures "of no ſmall elegance. There are few animals "whoſe parts are better contrived than thoſe of "the Monkey. He has the hands of a man, join-"ed to the ſpringy limbs of a beaſt: he is admira-"bly calculated for running, leaping, grappling "and climbing: and yet there are few animals "which ſeem to have leſs Beauty in the eyes of "all mankind," *&c.* In theſe inſtances, and in all the others he mentions, it is clear, that the animals are not, in general, conſidered as beautiful: but if I am not deceived, the reaſon of this is, not that the Fitneſs of their conſtruction is not a conſideration capable of producing the Emotion

tion of Beauty, but that in general we never conſider the animals in the light of this Fitneſs of their conſtruction. Such Forms are not naturally beautiful, or have none of thoſe ingredients which were before mentioned as conſtituting the natural Beauty of Forms. It is the natural Beauty of Forms, however, which firſt ſtrikes us, becauſe it demands neither any previous knowledge, nor any fixed attention. Such animals, beſides, have many unpleaſing qualities from their inſtincts, their characters, and their modes of life. It is in the light of theſe qualities, however, that we generally conſider them; becauſe painful or diſagreeable qualities much more ſuddenly, as well as more powerfully affect us, than qualities of an oppoſite kind. Whenever, however, we can prevail upon ourſelves to diſregard theſe unpleaſing conſiderations, and to conſider the animals in the light of the Fitneſs of their conſtruction, I believe it is agreeable to every man's experience, that their Forms become then, in ſome degree, objects of Beauty. To ſay at firſt, that the head of the Swine was a beautiful Form, might perhaps expoſe the perſon who aſſerted it to ridicule; but if the admirable Fitneſs of its conſtruction, for the neceſſities of the animal, are explained, there is no perſon who will not feel from this view of it, an Emotion of Beauty. There is nothing more common, accordingly, in books of Anatomy, or Natural Hiſtory, than the term of Beauty applied to many common, and many diſagreeable parts of the animal Frame; nor is there any Reader, who conſiders the ſubjects in the light of their Fitneſs alone,

alone, who does not feel the ſame Emotion with Writers. A Phyſician talks even of a beautiful Theory of Dropſies or Fevers, a Surgeon of a beautiful Inſtrument for operations, an Anatomiſt of a beautiful Subject or Preparation. The reſt of the world, indeed, hear this language with ſome degree of aſtoniſhment. It is in the light only of Horror or Diſguſt that ſuch objects appear to them; but to the Artiſts theſe qualities have long diſappeared, and the only light in which they regard them, is their Fitneſs for the purpoſes of their Arts. Theſe inſtances are perhaps ſufficient to ſhow, that even the objects which are moſt deſtitute of Natural Beauty, become beautiful, when they are regarded only in the light of their Fitneſs; and that the reaſon why they do not always appear beautiful to us, is, that we in general leave this quality out of our conſideration. That pleaſing or agreeable Forms receive Beauty from their Fitneſs; and that the moſt perfect Form of Natural Beauty may receive additional Beauty from its being wiſely adapted to ſome End, are facts too obvious to require any illuſtration. It is only to be obſerved, that this quality, in its effect of producing the Emotion of Beauty, is ſubject to the ſame limitations with every other quality of Emotion. Such qualities, when either familiar or minute, fail in producing an Emotion ſufficiently ſtrong to be the foundation of Beauty; and as the Emotion which we receive from Fitneſs, is in itſelf greatly inferior to many other Emotions of Pleaſure, there are perhaps more inſtances, where this quality is obſerved, without

out the ſentiment of Beauty, than in moſt other qualities of a ſimilar kind with which we are acquainted. Unleſs when it is either great or new, the generality of men feel little Beauty in any Expreſſion of Fitneſs.

SEC-

II.

Of the BEAUTY *of* PROPORTION.

I apprehend alſo, that the Beauty of PROPORTION in Forms is to be aſcribed to this cauſe; and that certain Proportions affect us with the Emotion of Beauty, not from any original capacity in ſuch qualities to excite this Emotion, but from their being expreſſive to us of the Fitneſs of the parts to the End deſigned. It is impoſſible for me, within the bounds which I preſcribe myſelf, to enter fully into the inveſtigation of the nature of Proportion. All I intend is to produce ſome of the conſiderations which induce me to join with Mr. HOGARTH in this concluſion.

1. I conceive, that the Emotion of pleaſure which Proportion affords, has no reſemblance to any pleaſure of ſenſation, but that it reſembles that feeling of ſatisfaction which we have in other caſes, where Means are properly adapted to their End. When a Chair or a Table, or any other common object is well proportioned, as far as I can judge, what we feel, is not a mere ſenſation of pleaſure, from a certain arrangement of parts, but an agreeable Emotion, from the perception of the proper diſpoſition of theſe parts, for the End deſigned. In the ſame

manner, the effect of diſproportion ſeems to me to bear no reſemblance to that immediate painful ſenſation which we feel from any diſagreeable ſound or ſmell, but to reſemble that kind of diſſatisfaction which we feel, when Means are unfitted to their End. Thus, the diſproportion in the legs of a Chair or Table, does not affect us with a ſimple ſenſation of pain, but with a very obſervable Emotion of diſſatisfaction or diſcontent, from the unſuitableneſs of this conſtruction for the purpoſes which the objects are intended to ſerve. Of the truth of this, every man muſt judge from his own experience.

The habit, indeed, which we have in a great many familiar caſes, of immediately conceiving this Fitneſs from the mere appearance of the Form, leads us to imagine, as it is expreſſed in common language, that we determine Proportion by the eye; and this quality of Fitneſs is ſo immediately expreſſed to us by the material Form, that we are ſenſible of little difference between ſuch judgments and a mere determination of ſenſe; yet every man muſt have obſerved, that in thoſe caſes, when either the object is not familiar to us, or the conſtruction intricate, our judgment is by no means ſo ſpeedy; and that we never diſcover the Proportion, until we previouſly diſcover the principle of the Machine, or the Means by which the End is produced.

2. The nature of language ſeems alſo very ſtrongly to ſhow the dependence of Proportion upon

upon Fitneſs, and that it produces the Emotion of Beauty, by being conſidered as the Sign of this quality. If a common perſon were aſked, why the Proportion of ſome particular building, or machine, or inſtrument pleaſed him, he would naturally anſwer, becauſe it rendered the object fit or proper for its end. If we were deſcribing a machine or inſtrument, to any perſon who was unacquainted with the meaning of the term Proportion, and wiſhed to inform him of the Beauty of this Proportion, we could do it perfectly well by ſubſtituting the term Fitneſs inſtead of it, and explaining to him the ſingular accuracy with which the ſeveral parts were adapted to the general end of the machine; and if we ſucceeded in this deſcription, he would have the ſame Emotion from the conſideration of this Fitneſs, that we ourſelves have from the conſideration of, what we call, its Proportion. It very often happens, in the ſame manner, that we read or hear accounts of Forms which we have never ſeen, and of conſequence, of the Proportions of which (if Proportion is a real and original quality in objects) it is impoſſible for us to judge; yet I think, if we are convinced that the Form is well contrived, and that its ſeveral parts are properly adjuſted to their End, we immediately ſatisfy ourſelves that it is well proportioned; and if we perfectly underſtand its nature or mechaniſm, we never heſitate to ſpeak of its Proportion, though we never have ſeen it. If Proportion, on the contrary, conſiſted in certain determinate relations, diſcoverable only by a peculiar ſenſe, all this could not poſſibly happen. The conſideration

of Fitneſs could no more influence our opinion of Proportion, than any other conſideration; and we could as little collect the belief of Proportion, in any Form from the conſideration of its Fitneſs, as from that of its Sound or Colour.

In a great variety of caſes, the terms Fitneſs and Proportion are perfectly ſynonymous. There is, however, a diſtinction between them, which it may be neceſſary to explain, as it will afford a more accurate conception of the nature of Proportion, and of the foundation of its Beauty.

Every Form which is ſuſceptible of Proportion, may be conſidered in either one or other of the following lights. 1*ſt*, In the light of its whole or general relation to the End deſigned, or when it is conſidered as a whole, without any diſtinction of parts; or, 2*dly*, In the light of the relation of its ſeveral parts to this End. Thus, in the caſe of a machine, we may ſometimes conſider it in the light of its general utility for the End it is deſtined to ſerve, and ſometimes in the light of the propriety of the different parts, for the attainment of this End. When we conſider it in the firſt light, it is its Fitneſs which we properly conſider. When we conſider it in the ſecond light, it is its Proportion we conſider. Fitneſs may therefore be ſuppoſed to expreſs the general relation of propriety between Means and an end, and Proportion a peculiar or ſubordinate relation of this kind, viz. the proper relation of parts to an End. Both

Both agree in expreſſing the relation of propriety between Means and their Ends. Fitneſs expreſſes the proper relation of the whole of the Means to the End. Proportion the proper relation of a part, or of parts, to their End.

In common language, accordingly, wherever we ſpeak of this relation in a ſubject which has no diviſion of parts, the terms are uſed ſynonymouſly. Thus we ſay, that a man's expences are fitted, or are proportioned to his income; that a man's ambition is fitted or proportioned to his talents; that an undertaking is fitted or proportioned to one's powers.

In ſubjects which are capable of diviſion into parts, on the other hand, the terms Fitneſs and Proportion are not uſed ſynonymouſly, but according to the explanation which I have now given. Thus we ſay, that the Form of the Eye is admirably fitted for Viſion; that the Teleſcope is fitted for diſcovering objects at a diſtance; that the Fire-engine is fitted for raiſing water; but we could not ſay in any of theſe caſes, that they were proportioned to their Ends. When we conſider theſe ſubjects as compoſed of parts, and attend to the Form of theſe parts for the attainment of their Ends, we immediately ſpeak of the Proportion of theſe parts. The juſt Proportion of ſuch parts, is accordingly nothing more, than that peculiar Form or dimention which has been found from experience beſt fitted for the accompliſhment of the purpoſe of the inſtrument or the machine. Proportion therefore may, I apprehend, be conſidered as appli-

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cable only to Forms compoſed of Parts, and to expreſs the relation of propriety between any part, or parts, and the End they are deſtined to ſerve.

3. It may be further obſerved, that Forms are juſt ſuſceptible of as many proportions, as they are ſuſceptible of parts neceſſary to the end, for which they are intended: and that every part which has no immediate relation to this end, is unſuſceptible of any accurate proportion. In many Forms of the moſt common kind, there are a great number of parts which have no relation to the end or purpoſe of the Form, and which are intended to ſerve the purpoſe of ornament rather than of uſe. In ſuch parts, accordingly we never expect or perceive any accurate proportion, nor is there any ſettled and permanent opinion of Beauty in them, as there is in the great and neceſſary parts of the Form. In the Form of a Chair, for inſtance, or Table, or Sopha, or Door or Window, ſeveral of the parts are merely ornamental: they have no immediate relation to the fitneſs of the Form, and they vary accordingly almoſt every year in their Forms and Sizes. All that is required of them is, that they ſhould not obſtruct the general fitneſs; within that limit they are ſuſceptible of perpetual and pleaſing Variety. There are other parts, however, of the ſame Forms, which are neceſſary to the general end or purpoſe of their conſtruction, as the height of the Chair for the convenience of ſitting, of the Table for its peculiar purpoſes, *&c.* Theſe parts, accordingly, have all a Proportion,

portion, which is immediately diſcerned, and which is never greatly violated without producing an Emotion of diſſatisfaction. If, on the contrary, Proportion was ſomething abſolute and independent in Forms, it ſeems difficult to imagine, that it ſhould be found only in thoſe Forms, which are ſuſceptible of fitneſs, and in thoſe parts only of ſuch Forms as admit of this quality.

4. Our ſenſe of Proportion in every Form, keeps pace with our knowledge of the fitneſs of its conſtruction. Where we have no acquaintance with the fitneſs of any Form, we have no ſenſe of its peculiar Proportions. No Man, for inſtance, ever preſumes to ſpeak of the Proportions of a Machine, of the uſe or purpoſe of which he is ignorant. When a new Machine is ſhown us, we may pronounce with regard to the ſimplicity or the complexneſs of its conſtruction, but we never venture to pronounce with regard to the propriety or impropriety of its Proportions. When our acquaintance is greater with the uſes or purpoſes of any particular claſs of Forms, than the generality of people, we are ſenſible of a greater number of pleaſing Proportions in ſuch objects, than the reſt of the world; and the ſame parts which others look upon with indifference, we perceive as beautiful, from our knowledge of the propriety of their conſtruction for the end deſigned. This every perſon muſt have obſerved in the language of Artiſts, upon the ſubject of the inſtruments of their own Arts; in the language of Anatomiſts, and Proficients in Natural Hiſtory, in many different ſubjects of their

their Science; as well as in the increaſe of his own ſenſe of Proportion in different Forms, with the increaſe of his knowledge of the ends that ſuch Forms are deſtined to ſerve. When any improvement, in the ſame manner, is made in the conſtruction of the Forms of Art, ſo that different Proportions of parts are introduced, and produce their end better than the former, the new Proportions gradually become beautiful, while the former loſe their Beauty. In general, it may be obſerved, that the Certainty of Proportion, is in all caſes dependent upon the Certainty of Fitneſs. 1*ſt*, Where this Fitneſs is abſolutely determined, as in many caſes of Mechanics, the Proportion is equally determined. 2*dly*, Where it is determined only by experience, the opinion of the Beauty of Proportion varies with the progreſs of ſuch experience. 3*dly*, Where this Fitneſs cannot be ſubjected to experience, as in the caſe of natural Forms, the common Proportion is generally conceived to be the fitteſt, and is therefore conſidered as the moſt beautiful. It is impoſſible, I apprehend, to reconcile theſe caſes of the dependence of our ſenſe of Proportion upon our opinion of Fitneſs, to the belief that there are any certain and eſtabliſhed Proportions in Forms, which are originally and independently beautiful.

Theſe illuſtrations ſeem to me very ſtrongly to ſhew the intimate connection which ſubſiſts between Proportion and Fitneſs; and to afford a much more eaſy and ſimple ſolution of the delight which Proportion produces, than the opinion

nion of its being a real and independent quality in objects.

There is, however, one caſe in which it may ſtill be doubted, whether this explanation of the nature of Proportion is ſufficient to account for the Phenomena: I mean in the caſe of ARCHITECTURE. The writers on this ſubject who have beſt underſtood the Art, have been unanimous in conſidering the Proportions which have been diſcovered in it, as deriving their effect from the original conſtitution of our nature, and as beautiful in themſelves without relation to any Expreſſion. They have been willing alſo, ſometimes, to ſupport their opinion by analogies drawn from Proportions in other ſubjects, and have remarked ſeveral caſes in which ſimilar Proportions are beautiful in Muſic and in Numbers. The futility of all reaſoning from ſuch analogies has been ſo often expoſed, and is in itſelf, indeed, ſo very obvious, that I ſhall not ſtop to conſider it.

I flatter myſelf, therefore, that it will not be conſidered as an unneceſſary digreſſion, if I endeavour to ſhew, that the Beauty of the Proportions in this Art, are reſolvable into the ſame principle, and that they pleaſe us, not from any original law of our nature, but as expreſſive of Fitneſs.

The Proportions in ARCHITECTURE relate either to its EXTERNAL or its INTERNAL Parts. I ſhall offer ſome obſervations upon theſe ſubjects ſeparately.

III.

III.

Of the EXTERNAL PROPORTIONS *of* ARCHITECTURE.

The Propriety or Fitneſs of any Building, intended for the habitation of Man, (as ſeen from without,) conſiſts chiefly in two things, 1*ſt*, In its Stability; and, 2*dly* In its being ſufficient for the ſupport of the Roof. Walls, in every country, at the ſame period of time, are nearly of an equal thickneſs. It is eaſy therefore, for the Spectator to judge from their external appearance, whether they are, or are not ſufficient for theſe two purpoſes. In plain buildings intended merely for uſe, and without any view to ornament, it is theſe conſiderations which chiefly determine our opinions of Proportion. When the walls are of ſuch a height as ſeems ſufficient both for their own ſtability, and for the ſupport of the weight which is impoſed upon them; and when the diſtance between them is ſuch, as appears ſufficient for ſupporting the weight of the roof, we conſider the houſe as well or as properly proportioned. When any of theſe circumſtances, on the contrary, are different; when the walls are either ſo high as to ſeem inſecure,

or

or the roof ſo large, as to ſeem too heavy for its ſupport, or the ſide walls ſo diſtant, as to beget an opinion of its inſecurity, we ſay, that the Building, in ſuch particulars, is ill proportioned. In ſuch caſes, what we mean by Proportion, is merely Fitneſs for the ends of ſtability and ſupport, and as this Fitneſs cannot be very accurately meaſured, and is in itſelf capable of wide limits, there are accordingly no accurate Proportions of this kind, and no Architect has ever attempted to ſettle them. The general concluſions, that we have formed from Experience, with regard to the Fitneſs of ſuch Forms, are the ſole guides of our opinion with reſpect to theſe Proportions. It may be obſerved alſo, that our ſentiments of the Proportions of ſuch Buildings depend upon the nature of the Buildings, and even upon the materials of which they are compoſed. Gothic Buildings, of which we know that the walls are conſiderably thicker than thoſe of modern days, admit of greater height, and of a greater appearance of weight in the roof, than Buildings of the preſent age. A houſe built of brick or of wood, does not admit of the ſame height of wall, &c. with a houſe built of ſtone, becauſe the walls are ſeldom ſo ſtrong. A houſe which is united with others, admits of a greater height than if it ſtood alone, becauſe we conceive it to be ſupported by the adjoining houſes. And a Building which has no roof, or nothing which it appears to ſupport, as a Tower, or Spire, admits of a much greater height than any other ſpecies of Building. Theſe Principles are all that ſeem to regulate the external Proportions of ſimple Buildings; all of them ſo obviouſly depending

pending upon Fitneſs, that it is unneceſſary to illuſtrate them farther.

It is not in ſuch Buildings, accordingly, that any very accurate external Proportions have ever been ſettled. This is peculiar to what are called the Orders of Architecture, in which the whole genius of the Art has been diſplayed, and in which the Proportions are ſettled with a certainty ſo abſolute, as to forbid almoſt the attempt at Innovation.

There are generally ſaid to be five orders of Architecture, *viz.* the Tuſcan, the Doric, the Ionic, the Corinthian, and the Compoſite. There are properly, however, only four, and ſome writers have further reduced them to three. What conſtitutes an order is its Proportions, not its ornaments. The Compoſite having the ſame proportions with the Corinthian, though very different in reſpect of its ornaments, is properly therefore conſidered only as a corrupted Corinthian.

Every order conſiſts of three great parts or diviſions; the Baſe, the Column, and the Entablature; and the governing Proportions relate to this diviſion. The whole of them compoſe the wall, or what anſwers to the wall of a common building, and ſupports the roof.

There is one great difference, however, to be obſerved between a common wall, and that aſſemblage of parts which conſtitutes an order. A common wall is intended to ſupport a roof, and derives its proportions in a great meaſure from this

this deſtination. To an order, the conſideration of the roof is unneceſſary. It is complete without any roof, and where a roof is neceſſary, it is generally ſo contrived as not to appear. The weight which is ſupported, or which appears to be ſupported in an order, is the Entablature. The Fitneſs of a wall, conſiſts in its appearing adequate to the ſupport of the roof. The Fitneſs of an order, or of the Proportions of an order, it ſhould ſeem alſo, from analogy, reaſonable to conclude, conſiſts in their appearing adequate to the ſupport of the Entablature, or of the weight which is impoſed upon them.

That this is really the caſe, and that it is from their being expreſſive to us of this Fitneſs, that the Proportions of theſe different orders appear beautiful, may perhaps ſeem probable, from the following conſiderations:

1. The appearance of theſe Proportions themſelves, ſeems very naturally to lead us to this concluſion. In all the orders, the Fitneſs of the parts to the ſupport of the peculiar weight, or appearance of weight in the Entablature, is apparent to every perſon, and conſtitutes an undoubted part of the pleaſure we receive from them. In the Tuſcan, where the Entablature is heavier than in the reſt, the Column and Baſe are proportionably ſtronger. In the Corinthian, where the Entablature is lighteſt, the Column and Baſe are proportionably ſlighter. In the Doric and Ionic, which are between theſe extremes, the forms of the Column and Baſe are in the ſame manner proportioned to the reciprocal weights of their Entablatures, being neither ſo ſtrong as the one,

nor

nor ſo ſlight as the other. If the Beauty of ſuch Proportions is altogether independent of Fitneſs, and derived from the immediate conſtitution of our nature, it is difficult to account for this coincidence; and as the Beauty of Fitneſs in theſe ſeveral caſes is univerſally allowed, it is altogether unphiloſophical, to ſubſtitute other cauſes of the ſame effect, until the inſufficiency of this cauſe is clearly pointed out.

2. The language of mankind, upon this ſubject, ſeems to confirm the ſame opinion. Whenever we either ſpeak or think of the Proportions of theſe different orders, the circumſtances of weight and ſupport enter both into our conſideration and our Expreſſion. The term Proportion, in its general acceptation, implies them; and if this term is not uſed, the ſame idea and the ſame pleaſure may be communicated by terms expreſſive of Fitneſs for the ſupport of weight. Heavineſs, and ſlightneſs or inſufficiency, are the terms moſt generally uſed to expreſs a deviation on either ſide, from the proper relation; both of them obviouſly including the conſideration of ſupport, and expreſſing the want of Proportion. When it is ſaid that a Baſe, a Column, or an Entablature is diſproportioned, it is the ſame thing as ſaying, that this part is unfitted to the reſt, and inadequate to the proper End of the Building. When it is ſaid, on the other hand, that all theſe ſeveral parts are properly adjuſted to their End, that the Baſe appears juſt ſufficient for the ſupport of the Column, and both for that of the Entablature, every perſon immediately concludes that the parts are perfectly proportioned:

portioned: And, I apprehend, it is very poſſible to give a man a perfect conception of the Beauty of theſe Proportions, and to make him feel it in the ſtrongeſt manner, without ever mentioning to him the name of Proportion, but merely by explaining to him under the conſideration of Fitneſs, and by ſhowing him from examples, that theſe Forms are the moſt proper which can be deviſed for the End to which they are deſtined. If our perception of the Beauty of Proportion, in ſuch caſes, were altogeter independent of any ſuch conſideration, I think, that theſe circumſtances in language could not poſſibly take place; and that it would be as poſſible to explain the nature and Beauty of Proportion by terms expreſſive of Sound or Colour, as by terms expreſſive of Fitneſs or Propriety.

3. The natural ſentiments of mankind on this ſubject, ſeem to have a different progreſs from what they would naturally have, if there were any abſolute Beauty in ſuch Proportions diſcoverable by the eye. It cannot ſurely be imagined, that an infant will perceive, or does perceive, the Beauty of ſuch Proportions in the ſame manner that he perceives the objects of any other external ſenſe. It is not found either, that the generality of mankind, even when come to mature age, expreſs any ſenſe of the abſolute Beauty of ſuch objects. It is true, indeed, that very early in life, we are ſenſible of diſproportion in Building, becauſe the ideas of bulk and ſupport are ſo early and ſo neceſſarily acquired, and the Eye is ſo ſoon habituated to judge of weight from viſible figure, that what is fit for the ſupport

of

of weight, is very ſoon generally aſcertained. What a common perſon, therefore, expreſſes upon the view of ſuch Proportions, is rather Satisfaction, than Delight. It is not the proportions which moſt affect him. It is the magnificence, the grandeur and the coſtlineſs which ſuch Buildings uſually diſplay; and though he is much pleaſed with ſuch Expreſſions, he is generally ſilent with regard to the Beauty of thoſe Proportions with which Connoiſſeurs are ſo much entraptured. If Proportion, on the contrary, were ſomething abſolutely beautiful in ſuch objects, the Progreſs of Taſte would be reverſed; the admiration of the infant would be given to theſe Proportions, long before he was able to judge of their Fitneſs; and the ſatisfaction which ariſes from the Expreſſion of Fitneſs, would be the laſt ingredient in his pleaſure, inſtead of being, as it now is, the firſt.

4. The nature of theſe Proportions themſelves ſeems very ſtrongly to indicate their dependence upon the Expreſſion of Fitneſs. The Beauty of ſuch Forms (on the ſuppoſition of their abſolute and independent Beauty) muſt conſiſt either in their Beauty, conſidered as individual objects, or in their relation to each other. If the effect ariſes from the nature of the individual Forms, then it muſt obviouſly follow, that ſuch Forms or Proportions muſt be beautiful in all caſes. I think, however, that there is no reaſon to believe this to be the caſe. The Baſe of a Column, for inſtance, (taken by itſelf, and independent of its ornaments, which in this inquiry are entirely to be excluded from conſideration), is not a more beautiful

beautiful Form than many others that may be given to the ſame quality of matter. The peculiar Form which its Proportions give it, is very far from being beautiful in every other caſe, as would neceſſarily happen, if it were beautiful in itſelf, and independent of every Expreſſion. A plain ſtone of the ſame magnitude may ſurely be carved into very different Forms from thoſe which conſtitute the baſes of any of the orders, and may ſtill be beautiful. In the ſame manner, the Column (conſidered as in the former caſe, merely in relation to its peculiar Form, and independent of its ornaments) is not more beautiful, as a Form, and perhaps not ſo beautiful, as many other Forms of a ſimilar kind. The trunk of many Trees, the Maſt of a Ship, the long and ſlender Gothic Column, and many other ſimilar objects, are to the full as beautiful, when conſidered merely as Forms without relation to any End, as any of the Columns in Architecture. If, on the contrary, theſe Forms were beautiful in themſelves, and as individual objects, no other ſimilar Forms could be equally beautiful, but ſuch as had the ſame Proportions. The ſame obſervation will apply equally to the Form of the Entablature. It would appear, therefore, that it is not from any abſolute Beauty in theſe Forms, conſidered individually, that our opinion of their Beauty in Compoſition, ariſes.

If it is ſaid, on the other hand, that the Beauty of Proportion in ſuch caſes, ariſes from the relation of theſe parts, and that there is ſomething in the relation of ſuch Forms and Magnitudes, in itſelf beautiful, independent of any conſideration

of Fitneſs, there ſeem to be equal difficulties. Beſides the relation of Fitneſs for the ſupport of weight, the only relations which take place among theſe parts, are the relations of Length and Breadth, and the relation of Magnitude. If this Beauty aroſe from the relation of Length, it is neceſſary to ſhow, that ſuch a proportion of three parts in point of length, is ſolely and permanently beautiful. If from the relation of Breadth, there is the ſame neceſſity of ſhowing, that ſuch a proportion of three parts in point of breadth is as permanently beautiful. If from both togeher, then the ſame Proportions only, ought to be felt as beautiful in all caſes to which the relations of Length and Breadth can apply. If again, this Beauty aroſe from the relation of Magnitude, it is neceſſary, in the ſame manner, to ſhow, that three magnitudes or quantities of matter, have in fact no other beautiful proportions but thoſe which takes place in ſuch orders. But as it is very obvious, that there is no foundation for ſuppoſing any ſuch law in our nature, and that, on the contrary, in innumerable caſes of all ſuch relations, different and contrary Proportions are beautiful, it cannot be ſuppoſed that ſuch Proportions are abſolutely beautiful from any of theſe relations.

The only relation, therefore, that remains, is the relation of Fitneſs; and if the ſame inquiry is carried on, I believe it will ſoon be found, that a certain Proportion of parts is neceſſarily demanded by tihs relation; and very probably alſo, that this certain Proportion, is in fact that of each

each of theſe orders, according to the particular bulk or weight that is given.

If an order is conſidered as an aſſemblage of weight, and parts to ſupport that weight, our experience immediately leads us to conceive a proper relation of theſe parts to their End. If the Entablature be conſidered as the weight, then of courſe a certain Form and ſize in the Column is demanded for the ſupport of it, and in the Baſe for the ſupport of both. A plain ſtone, for inſtance, ſet upon its end, has no proportion further than for the purpoſe of ſtability. If it appears firm, it has all the proportions we deſire or demand, and its form may be varied in a thouſand ways, without interfering with our ſenſe of its Proportions. Place a Column, or any other weight upon this ſtone; immediately another Proportion is demanded, *viz.* its Proportion to the ſupport of this weight. The Form ſupported, however, has no Proportion farther than that which is neceſſary for its ſtability, or for continuing in its ſituation. It may be more or leſs beautiful in point of Form, from other conſiderations, but not upon account of its Proportion. Above this again place an additional body; immediately the intermediate Form demands a new Proportion, *viz.* to the weight it ſupports; and the firſt part, or the Baſe, demands alſo another Proportion, in conſideration of the additional weight which is thus impoſed upon it. In this ſuppoſition it is obvious, that the conſideration of Fitneſs alone, leads us to expect a certain Proportion among each of theſe parts; the parts are beautiful or pleaſing, juſt as they anſwer to this

demand, and where the parts are few, and experiments eaſy, it ſeems not difficult at laſt, to arrive at that perfect Proportion which ſatisfies the Eye, as ſufficient for the purpoſes of ſupport and ſtability. If we leave, therefore, every thing elſe out of conſideration, the conſideration of Fitneſs alone ſeems ſufficient to account, both for the origin of ſuch Proportions in Architecture, and for the pleaſure which attends the obſervation of them.

Although, however, the influence of the Expreſſion of Fitneſs upon the Beauty of Proportion ſhould be allowed, and the doctrine of the original Beauty of Proportion ſhould be deſerted, as inconſiſtent with experience, yet it may ſtill be doubted whether this Expreſſion, is ſufficient to account for the delight which moſt men feel from the orders of Architecture: and it may naturally be aſked, why mankind have ſo long adhered to theſe Forms, without attempting to deviate from them, if they are not ſolely and peculiarly beautiful. The ſatisfaction we feel from the obſervation of Fitneſs, it may be ſaid, is a moderate and feeble pleaſure, when compared with that delight with which the models of Architecture are ſurveyed: and the uniform adherence of men to the eſtabliſhed Proportions, is too ſtrong a proof of their abſolute or peculiar Beauty, to be oppoſed by any arguments of a diſtant or metaphyſical kind.

With regard to the firſt of theſe objections, I acknowledge, that the mere conſideration of Fitneſs is inſufficient to account for the pleaſure which

which is generally derived from the eſtabliſhed orders: But I apprehend, that this pleaſure ariſes from very different cauſes, than from their Proportions, and that, in fact, when theſe Proportions only are conſidered, the pleaſure which is generally felt, is not greater than that which we experience, when we perceive in any great work, the proper relation of Means to an End.

The Proportions of theſe orders, it is to be remembered, are diſtinct ſubjects of Beauty from the Ornaments with which they are embelliſhed, from the Magnificence with which they are executed, from the purpoſes of Elegance they are intended to ſerve, or the ſcenes of Grandeur they are deſtined to adorn. It is in ſuch ſcenes, however, and with ſuch additions, that we are accuſtomed to obſerve them; and while we feel the effect of all theſe accidental Aſſociations, we are ſeldom willing to examine what are the cauſes of the complex Emotion we feel, and readily attribute to the nature of the Architecture itſelf, the whole pleaſure which we enjoy. But beſides theſe, there are other Aſſociations we have with theſe Forms, that ſtill more powerfully ſerve to command our admiration; for they are the GRECIAN orders; they derive their origin from thoſe times, and were the ornament of thoſe countries, which are moſt hallowed in our imaginations; and it is difficult for us to ſee them, even in their modern copies, without feeling them operate upon our minds, as reliques of thoſe poliſhed nations where they firſt aroſe, and of that greater people by whom they were afterwards borrowed. While this ſpecies of

Architecture

Architecture is attended with ſo many and ſo pleaſing Aſſociations, it is difficult even for a man of reflection to diſtinguiſh, between the different ſources of his Emotion; or in the moments in which this delight is felt, to aſcertain what is the exact portion of his pleaſure which is to be attributed to theſe Proportions alone; and two different cauſes combine to lead us to attribute to the ſtyle of Architecture itſelf, the Beauty which ariſes from many other Aſſociations. In the firſt place, while it is under our eye, this Architecture itſelf is the great object of our regard, and the central object of all theſe Aſſociations. It is the material ſign, in fact, of all the various affecting qualities which are connected with it, and it diſpoſes us in this, as in every other caſe, to attribute to the ſign, the effect which is produced by the qualities ſignified. When we reflect, upon the other hand, in our calmer moments, upon the ſource of our Emotion, another motive ariſes to induce us to conſider theſe Proportions as the ſole or the principal cauſe of our pleaſure; for theſe Proportions are the only qualities of the object, which are perfectly or accurately aſcertained; they have received the aſſent of all ages ſince their diſcovery: they are the acknowledged objects of Beauty; and having thus got poſſeſſion of one undoubted principle, our natural love of ſyſtem, induces us to aſcribe the whole of the effect to this principle alone, and eaſily ſatisfies our minds by ſaving us the trouble of a long and tedious inveſtigation. That this cauſe has had its full effect in this caſe, will, I believe, appear very evident to thoſe, who attend to the

the enthuſiaſm with which, in general, the writers in Architecture ſpeak of the Beauty of Proportion, and compare it with the common ſentiments of men upon the ſubject of this Beauty. Both theſe cauſes conſpire to miſlead our judgment in this point, and to induce us to attribute to one quality in ſuch objects, that Beauty which in truth reſults from many united qualities.

It will be found, I believe, on the other hand, that the real Beauty of ſuch Proportions, is in fact not greater than that which we feel in many caſes where we perceive means properly adapted to their End; and that the admiration we feel from the proſpect of the orders of Antiquity, is neceſſarily to be aſcribed to other cauſes beſides theſe Proportions. The common people, undoubtedly, feel a very inferior Emotion of Beauty from ſuch objects, to that which is felt by men of liberal education, becauſe they have none of thoſe Aſſociations which modern education ſo early connects with them. The Man of Letters feels alſo a weaker Emotion than that which is felt by the Connoiſſeur or the Architect, becauſe he has none of the Aſſociations which belong to the Art, and never conſiders them in relation to the genius or ſkill, or invention which they diſplay. Deprive theſe orders, in the ſame manner, of their cuſtomary ornaments, and leave only the great and governing Proportions; or change only, in the ſlighteſt degree, their Forms, without altering theſe Proportions, and their Beauty will be in a great meaſure deſtroyed. Preſerve, on the other

other hand, the whole of the orders, but diminiſh in a great degree their ſcale; and though they will ſtill be beautiful, yet their Beauty will be infinitely inferior to that which they have upon their uſual ſcale of magnificence. It is poſſible, in the Form of a Candleſtick, or ſome other trifling utenſil, to imitate with accuracy, any of theſe orders. It is poſſible in many of the common articles of Furniture, to imitate ſome of the greateſt models of this Art; but who does not know that their great Beauty in ſuch an employment would be loſt? Yet ſtill their Proportions are the ſame, if their Proportions are the ſole cauſe of their Beauty. Deſtroy in the ſame manner, all the Aſſociations of Elegance, of Magnificence, of Coſtlineſs, and ſtill more than all, of Antiquity, which are ſo ſtrongly connected with ſuch Forms, and I conceive every man will acknowledge, that the pleaſure which their Proportions would afford, would not in fact be greater than that which we feel in other caſes, where means are properly adapted to their End.

With regard to the ſecond objection, viz. That the uniform adherence of mankind to theſe Proportions, is in itſelf a ſufficient proof of their ſole or abſolute Beauty; I conceive that many other cauſes of this adherence may be aſſigned, and that theſe cauſes are ſufficient to account for the effect, without ſuppoſing any peculiar law of our nature, by which ſuch Proportions are originally beautiful. They who have had opportunities of remarking the extenſive influence which the Aſſociations of Antiquity

quity have upon our minds, will be convinced, that this cauſe alone has had a very powerful effect in producing this uniformity of opinion: and they who conſider, that the real effect of Proportion is to produce only a very moderate delight, will eaſily perceive, that an almoſt unſurmountable obſtacle has been placed to every invention or improvement in this Art, when ſuch inventions could oppoſe only a calm and rational pleaſure, to that enthuſiaſm which is founded upon ſo many, and ſo intereſting Aſſociations.

But beſides theſe, there are other cauſes in the nature of the Art itſelf, which ſufficiently account for the permanence of Taſte upon this ſubject. In every production of human Labour, the influence of Variety is limited by two circumſtances, viz. by the coſtlineſs, and the permanence of the materials upon which that Labour is employed. Wherever the materials of any object, whether of uſe or of luxury, are coſtly, wherever the original price of ſuch ſubjects is great, the influence of the love of Variety is diminiſhed: the objects have a great intrinſic value, independent of their particular Form or Faſhion; and as the deſtruction of the Form, is in moſt caſes the deſtruction of the ſubject itſelf, the ſame Form is adhered to with little Variation. In Dreſs, for inſtance, in which the Variation of Faſhion is more obſervable than in moſt other ſubjects, it is thoſe parts of Dreſs which are at leaſt coſtly, of which the Forms are moſt frequently changed: in proportion as the original value increaſes, the diſpoſition to

Variety

Variety diminiſhes; and in ſome objects, which are extremely coſtly, as in the caſe of jewels, there is no change of Faſhion whatever, except in circumſtances different from the value of the objects themſelves, as in their ſetting or diſpoſition. Of all the fine Arts, however, Architecture is by far the moſt coſtly. The wealth of individuals is frequently diſſipated by it: and even the revenue of nations, is equal only to very ſlow, and very infrequent productions of this kind. The value, therefore, of ſuch objects, is in a great meaſure independent of their Forms; the invention of men is little excited to give an additional value to ſubjects, which in themſelves are ſo valuable; and the Art itſelf, after it has arrived at a certain neceſſary degree of perfection, remains in a great meaſure ſtationary, both from the infrequency of caſes in which invention can be employed, and from the little demand there is for the exerciſe of that invention. The nature of the Grecian orders very plainly indicates, that they were originally executed in wood, and that they were ſettled before the Greeks had begun to make uſe of ſtone in their buildings. From the period that ſtone was employed, and that of courſe public buildings became more coſtly, little farther progreſs ſeems to have been made in the Art. The coſtlineſs of the ſubject, in this as in every other caſe, gave a kind of permanent value to the Form by which it was diſtinguiſhed.

If, beſides the coſtlineſs of the ſubject, it is alſo permanent or durable, this character is ſtill farther increaſed. Thoſe productions, of which the

the materials are periſhable, and muſt often be renewed, are from their nature ſubjected to the influence of Variety. Chairs and Tables, for inſtance, and the other common articles of Furniture, cannot well laſt above a few years, and very often not ſo long. In ſuch articles, accordingly, there is room for the invention of the Artiſt to diſplay itſelf, and as the ſubject itſelf is of no very great value, and may derive a conſiderable one from its Form, a ſtrong motive is given to the exerciſe of this invention. But buildings may laſt, and are intended to laſt for centuries. The life of Man is very inadequate to the duration of ſuch productions: and the preſent period of the world, though old with reſpect to thoſe Arts, which are employed upon periſhable ſubjects, is yet young in relation to an Art, which is employed upon ſo durable materials as thoſe of Architecture. Inſtead of a few years, therefore, centuries muſt probably paſs before ſuch productions demand to be renewed, and long before that period is elapſed, the ſacredneſs of Antiquity is acquired by the ſubject itſelf, and a new motive given for the preſervation of ſimilar Forms. In every country accordingly, the ſame effect has taken place: and the ſame cauſes which have thus ſerved to produce among us for ſo many years, an uniformity of Taſte with regard to the ſtyle of Grecian Architecture, have produced alſo among the nations of the Eaſt, for a much longer courſe of time, a ſimilar uniformity of Taſte with regard to their ornamental ſtyle of Architecture; and have perpetuated among them the ſame Forms, which were in uſe among their forefathers,

fathers, before the Grecian orders were invented.

It is impoſſible for me to purſue theſe ſpeculations, with regard to the foundation of Beauty in Architecture, to the extent to which they would lead. The hints which I have now offered, may perhaps ſatisfy the Reader, that the Beauty of the external Proportions of Architecture, is to be aſcribed to their Expreſſion of Fitneſs; that this Beauty is in fact not greater than what is often felt from ſimilar Expreſſion in other ſubjects; and that both the admiration of mankind, and the uniformity of their Taſte with regard to the ſtyle of Grecian Architecture, is to be aſcribed to other cauſes, than any abſolute or independent Beauty in the Proportions by which it is diſtinguiſhed.

IV.

Of the INTERNAL PROPORTIONS *of* ARCHITECTURE.

By the Internal Proportions of Architecture, I mean that diſpoſition of the three dimenſions of Length, Breadth and Height which is neceſſary to render a room or apartment beautiful or pleaſing in its Form. Every man is able at firſt ſight to ſay, whether a room is well or ill proportioned; although perhaps it is difficult to ſay, what is the principle from which this propriety is determined. Many of the writers upon Architecture conſider certain Proportions of this kind as beautiful from the original conſtitution of our nature, and without relation to any Expreſſion. I apprehend, on the contrary, that the Beauty of Proportion, in this, as in the former caſe, ariſes from its Expreſſion of Fitneſs.

I have already obſerved, that a plain wall is ſuſceptible of no other Proportion than that Proportion of height which is neceſſary for the Expreſſion of Strength or Stability. If it appears firm and ſufficient, it has all the Proportion we deſire. Suppoſe any ſpace incloſed by four walls, the ſame Proportion remains; we require that the height ſhould be ſuch as to indicate

ſtability,

ſtability, and if this is anſwered, we require no more. The Form of the incloſure may be more or leſs beautiful, from other cauſes; but we never ſay that it is beautiful on account of its Proportion. Add a roof to this incloſure; and immediately a variety of other Proportions are demanded, from the conſideration of the weight which is now to be ſupported. If the walls are very high, they have the appearance of inſufficiency for this ſupport: if very low, they indicate an unneceſſary and unuſual weight in the roof. A certain Proportion, therefore, in point of height is demanded. If the length of the incloſure is great, the roof appears alſo to be inſufficiently ſupported, and from the laws of perſpective its weight ſeems to increaſe as it retires from the Eye. A certain Proportion therefore in point of Length is demanded. If in the laſt caſe, the breadth of the incloſure is very great, a ſtill ſtronger conviction of inſufficiency ariſes from the diſtance of the ſupporting walls. A certain proportion, therefore, in point of Breadth is demanded, for the ſame end. Wherever a Form of this kind is produced; wherever walls are united for the ſupport of a roof, theſe Proportions are neceſſarily required; and ſo far are they from being remote from common obſervation, that there is no man who is not immediately ſenſible of any great violation of them. Every apartment, however, is an incloſure of this kind. It ſeems natural, therefore, to imagine, that the Proportions of an apartment will be pleaſing, when they appear ſufficient for the full and eaſy ſupport of the roof; and that they are beautiful from being expreſſive of

of this Fitneſs. This propoſition may perhaps be more obvious from the following conſiderations:

1. It may be obſerved, that the real Beauty of Proportion in this caſe, is not greater than that which attends the Expreſſion of Fitneſs in other caſes; and that this Expreſſion is perfectly ſufficient to account for the whole of the delight which men in general feel from theſe objects. Artiſts, indeed, very frequently talk with enthuſiaſm of the Beauty of ſuch Proportions, and are willing to aſcribe to the Proportions themſelves, that Emotion which they in reality receive from the aſſociations which their art, and their education have connected with them; but whatever may be the language of Artiſts, the uniform language of the bulk of mankind is very different. What they feel from the appearance of a well proportioned room, is ſatisfaction, rather than poſitive delight: they are hurt with the want of Proportion; but they are not greatly enraptured with its preſence. What they are delighted with, in apartments where this Beauty has been ſtudied, is their Decoration and their Furniture; the Convenience, or Elegance, or Magnificence which they exhibit. Every one knows, accordingly, that the beſt proportioned room, before it is finiſhed, and while nothing but its Proportions are diſcernible, produces only a very calm and moderate pleaſure, in no reſpect greater than that which we feel from a well conſtructed machine, or convenient piece of furniture. Remove even the

the Furniture from the moſt finiſhed apartment, and the delight which we receive from it is immediately diminiſhed; yet the Proportions are altogether independent of the furniture, and are much more diſcernible when it is removed. No perſon, in the ſame manner, remarks the Proportions of the miſerable room of a cottage, or any other mean dwelling; yet the moſt regular Proportions may, and ſometimes are to be found in a cottage. If the apartments in ſuch a building were purpoſely conſtructed according to the moſt rigorous laws of Proportion, I apprehend, that they would produce no Emotion greater than that of ſimple Satisfaction; yet if theſe Proportions were themſelves originally beautiful, they ought in this caſe to produce the ſame delight as in the Senate-houſe or the Palace. If therefore (as ſeems to be evident) certain Proportions are demanded in a room, as expreſſive of Fitneſs; and if the Emotion that is produced by the eſtabliſhed and regular Proportions, is no greater than that which we receive in other caſes, from the Expreſſion of this quality, it ſeems reaſonable to conclude, that theſe Proportions are in fact beautiful, from the Expreſſion of this Fitneſs.

2. The general language of mankind ſeems to confirm the ſame opinion. Whoever has had occaſion to attend to the common language of men on this ſubject, muſt have obſerved, that the uſual terms by which they expreſs their ſenſe of Proportion, or of the want of Proportion in a room, are thoſe of Lightneſs and Heavineſs; terms which obviouſly ſuppoſe the belief

lief of weight and of ſupport, and which could not have been uſed, if the Beauty of Form, in this caſe, did not depend upon the Fitneſs or propriety of this relation. The terms Proportion and Diſproportion are in truth altogether unintelligible to the common people; and to deſcribe to them any apartment, in ſuch terms, leaves them as ignorant as ever of its Beauty; but there is hardly any man who does not readily apprehend, that an apartment is of a pleaſing Form, when he is told that the walls are neither too high, nor too low, nor too wide for the ſupport of the roof, or who will not as readily apprehend the contrary, when he is told, that in either of theſe reſpects, an appearance of inſecurity is produced. A room which is low, or wide in the roof, is in general ſaid to be heavy. A room, on the contrary, which is high in the roof, and in which this weight ſeems to be properly and eaſily ſuſtained, is ſaid to be light. If we were under the neceſſity of interpreting to a common perſon the language of Artiſts, or of explaining to him in what the Beauty of Form in this reſpect conſiſts, I apprehend, we ſhould naturally do it, by repreſenting it to him as light, or as ſo contrived that the ſupport was perfectly adapted to the weight; and, on the other hand, if we were to explain to him in what reſpect any room was deficient, we ſhould as naturally do it, by pointing out to him where the conſtruction was deficient in Fitneſs, and had the appearance of heavineſs or inſufficient ſupport. In this manner alſo, without ever hearing of the terms of Proportion or Diſproportion, or conſidering the ſubject in any other light than that of Fitneſs, he might acquire

a perfect conception of this Beauty; and be led, in fact, to the ſame concluſions with regard to the proper compoſition of theſe dimenſions, that are already eſtabliſhed under the title of Proportions. If theſe Proportions, however, were originally and independently beautiful, no explanation of them from another ſenſe could poſſibly be intelligible; and the ſubſtitution of the term Fitneſs would be as unmeaning as that Sound or Colour. I am far from contending, that the generality of men are very accurate in their notions of the propriety of the relation of weight and ſupport; or very proper judges of the perfection of Proportion in this reſpect. But I apprehend, that the terms of Heavineſs and Lightneſs which they employ, and univerſally underſtand, are a ſufficient evidence of the principle upon which their judgments are formed, and that they ſhow, that it is from the Expreſſion of Fitneſs for the ſupport of weight that their admiration is determined.

The ſame obſervation which was made with regard to the Progreſs of Taſte, in the external Proportions of this Art, is applicable alſo to its internal Proportions. If they were originally and independently beautiful, the earlier period of life would be the moſt remarkable for the diſcovery of them; and it would be only in later life, and in proportion to our Experience, that we could diſcover the additional Beauty which they derive from their Fitneſs. Every one knows, however that the real progreſs is different, that during the years of infancy and childhood no ſenſibility whatever is ſhewn to this Beauty; that it is only as our Experience enables us to judge of the relation

relation between weight and ſupport, that we begin to be ſenſible of it; that they whoſe occupations have prevented them from forming any very accurate judgment of this kind, are proportionably deficient in the accuracy of their Taſte; and that in general, the bulk of mankind have no farther conception of this ſpecies of Beauty, than what ariſes from the conſideration of Fitneſs for the ſupport of weight.

3. If there were any abſolute and independent Beauty in ſuch Proportions, it ſeems reaſonable to imagine, that every violation of them would be equally painful; and that the deviation from them in each of theſe dimenſions, would be attended with a ſimilar Emotion of Diſcontent. All theſe Proportions relate either to the Height, the Length, or the Breadth of an apartment. Every man, however, muſt have obſerved, that it is with very different feelings he regards the want of Proportion in theſe three reſpects. Too great a Height in a room is not nearly ſo painful as too little Height; and too great a length produces a trifling Emotion of Diſcontent, compared with that which we feel from too great Breadth. Whether a room is a few feet too high, or too long, few people obſerve; but every one obſerves a much leſs diſproportion, either in the diminution of its Height, or in the extent of its Breadth. The moſt general faults, accordingly, which common people find with apartments, is either in their being too low, or too broad. The Proportions of Height and Length they ſeldom attend to, if they are not greatly violated. Theſe facts, though not eaſily reconcilable with the doctrine of the

abſolute Beauty of theſe Proportions, agree very minutely with the account which I have given of the origin of this Beauty. If this Beauty ariſes from the Expreſſion of Fitneſs, the Proportions, of which the violation ſhould affect us the moſt, ought to be thoſe which are moſt neceſſary for the production of this Fitneſs. Theſe, however, very obviouſly, are either too little Height, or too great Breadth: the firſt immediately indicating an unuſual weight in the roof, and the other expreſſing the greateſt poſſible inſufficiency for the ſupport of this weight. The moſt unpleaſing Form of an apartment, accordingly, that it is poſſible to contrive, is that of being at the ſame time very broad, and very low in the roof. Too great Height, and too great length, on the other hand, have not ſo diſagreeable Expreſſions. By the firſt, at leaſt, Fitneſs is, in no material degree, violated, and what we feel from it is chiefly a ſlight Emotion of Diſcontent, from its being unſuited to the general character or deſtination of rooms. Our indifference to the ſecond diſproportion, or too great length, ariſes from a different cauſe, *viz.* from our knowledge that the Beams which ſupport the roof are laid latitudinally, and our conſequent belief that the difference of Length makes no difference with regard to the ſufficiency of ſupport. Change, accordingly, in any apartment, this diſpoſition of the beams; let the Spectator perceive, that they are placed according to the length, and not as uſual according to the breadth of the room; and whatever may be its other dimenſions, or however great length theſe dimenſions may require, no greater length will be permitted without pain, than

than that which is expreſſive of perfect ſufficiency in the beams for the ſupport of the roof. As there is thus no uniform Emotion which attends the perception of theſe Proportions, as would neceſſarily be the caſe, if their Beauty were perceived by any peculiar ſenſe; and as the Emotion which we, in fact, receive from them, is different, according to their different Expreſſions of Fitneſs, it ſeems reaſonable to aſcribe their Beauty to this Expreſſion, and not to any original Beauty in the Proportions themſelves.

4. If there were any original Beauty in ſuch Proportions, they would neceſſarily be as certain as the objects of any other ſenſe; and there would be one preciſe proportion of the three dimenſions of Length, Breadth and Height, ſolely and permanently beautiful. Every one knows, however, that this is not the caſe; no Artiſt has ever preſumed to fix on ſuch Proportions; and ſo far is there from being any permanent Beauty in any one relation of theſe dimenſions, that the ſame Proportions which are beautiful in one apartment, are not beautiful in others. From whatever cauſes theſe variations in the Beauty of Proportion ariſe, they conclude immediately againſt the doctrine of their original Beauty. There ſeem, however, to be three principal cauſes of this difference in our opinion of the Beauty of Proportion, which I muſt confine myſelf barely to mention, without attempting the full illuſtration of them.

1. The firſt is the conſideration of the weight ſupported. As all roofs are ſupported by the ſide

ſide walls, and compoſed in general of the uniform material of wood, there is a certain, though not a very preciſe limit which we impoſe to their breadth, from our knowledge that if they paſs this limit they are inſufficient and inſecure. To the length and to the height, on the other hand, we do not impoſe any ſuch rigorous limits, becauſe neither of theſe Proportions interfere materially with our opinion of ſecurity. Within this limit of breadth, there may be ſeveral Proportions to the length and height, which ſhall be univerſally pleaſing. But beyond this limit, theſe Proportions ceaſe to be pleaſing, and become painful in the ſame degree that they paſs this boundary of apparent ſecurity. Thus, a room of twelve feet ſquare, may conſtitute a pleaſing Form; but a room of ſixty feet ſquare would be poſitively diſagreeable. A room twenty-four feet in length, by eighteen in breadth, may be ſufficiently pleaſing; but a room ſixty feet in length, by fifty in breadth, would conſtitute a very unpleaſing Form. Many other inſtances might eaſily be produced, to ſhow, that the Beauty of every apartment depends on the appearance of proper ſupport to the roof; and that on this account, the ſame proportion of breadth that is beautiful in one caſe, becomes poſitively painful in others.

2. A ſecond cauſe of this difference in our opinion of the Beauty of Proportion, ariſes from the character of the apartment. Every one muſt have obſerved, that the different Forms of rooms, their difference of magnitude, and various other cauſes, give them diſtinct characters, as

thoſe

thoſe of Gaiety, Simplicity, Solemnity, Grandeur, Magnificence, *&c.* No room is ever beautiful, which has not ſome ſuch pleaſing character; the terms by which we expreſs this Beauty are ſignificant of theſe characters; and however regular the Proportions of an apartment may be, if they do not correſpond to the general Expreſſion, we conſider the Form as defective or imperfect. Thus, the ſame Proportion of height which is beautiful in a room of Gaiety, or Cheerfulneſs, would be felt as a defect in an apartment of which the character was Severity or Melancholy. The ſame proportion of length which is pleaſing in an elegant or convenient room, would be a defect in an apartment of Magnificence or Splendour. The great Proportion of breadth which ſuits a Temple or a Senate-houſe, as according with the ſevere and ſolemn character of the apartment, would be poſitively unpleaſing in any room which was expreſſive of Cheerfulneſs or Lightneſs. In proportion alſo, as apartments differ in ſize, different Proportions become neceſſary in this reſpect, to accord with the characters which the difference of Magnitude produces. The ſame Proportion of height which is pleaſing in a cheerful room, would be too little for the hall of a great caſtle, where vaſtneſs is neceſſary to agree with the ſublimity of its character; and the ſame relation of Breadth and Height which is ſo wonderfully affecting in the Gothic Cathedral, although at variance with all the rules of Proportion, would be both abſurd and painful, in the Forms of any common apartment. In general, I believe it will be found, that the great and poſitive Beauty of apartments

ariſes from their character; that where no character is diſcovered, the generality of men expreſs little admiration even at the moſt regular Proportions; that every difference of character requires a correſpondent difference in the compoſition of the dimenſions; and that this demand is ſatisfied, or a beautiful Form produced, only when the compoſition of the different Proportions is ſuch as to produce one pure and unmingled Expreſſion.

3. The third cauſe of the difference of our opinion of the Beauty of Proportion ariſes from the deſtination of the apartment. All apartments are intended for ſome uſe or purpoſe of human life. We demand, therefore, that the Form of them ſhould be accommodated to theſe Ends; and wherever the Form is at variance with the End, however regular, or generally beautiful its Proportions may be, we are conſcious of an Emotion of diſſatisfaction and diſcontent. The moſt obvious illuſtration of the dependence of the Beauty of Proportion, on this ſpecies of utility, may be taken from the common ſyſtem that natural Taſte has dictated in the Proportion of different apartments in great houſes. The hall, the ſaloon, the antichamber, the drawing room, the dining-room, the bed-chamber, the dreſſing-room, the library, the chapel, *&c.* have all different Forms and different Proportions. Change theſe Proportions; give to the dining-room the Proportions of the ſaloon, to the dreſſing-room thoſe of the library, to the chapel the Proportions of the antichamber, or to the drawing-room thoſe of the hall, *&c.* and every one will

will conſider them as unpleaſing and defective Forms, becauſe they are unfitted to the Ends they are deſtined to ſerve.

The obſervations which I have now offered on the Beauty of the Internal Proportions of Architecture, ſeem to afford ſufficient evidence for concluding in general,

That the Beauty of theſe Proportions is not original and independent, but that it ariſes in all caſes from the Expreſſion of ſome ſpecies of FITNESS.

The Fitneſs, however, which ſuch Proportions may expreſs, is of different kinds; and the Reader who will purſue the ſlight hints that I have ſuggeſted upon the ſubject, may perhaps agree with me in the following concluſions:

1. That one Beauty of theſe Proportions ariſes from their Expreſſion of Fitneſs for the ſupport of the weight impoſed.

2. That a ſecond ſource of their Beauty conſiſts in their Expreſſion of Fitneſs for the preſervation of the character of the apartment.

3. That a third ſource of their Beauty conſiſts in their Expreſſion of Fitneſs, in the general Form, for its peculiar purpoſe or End.

The two firſt Expreſſions conſtitute the PERMANENT Beauty, and the third the ACCIDENTAL Beauty of an apartment.

In

In every beautiful apartment the two firſt Expreſſions muſt be united. An apartment, of which the Proportions expreſs the moſt perfect Fitneſs for the ſupport of the roof, but which is itſelf expreſſive of no character, is beheld rather with ſatisfaction than delight, and is never remarked as beautiful. The Beauty of character, on the other hand, is neglected, if the Proportions of the apartment are ſuch as to indicate inſufficiency or inſecurity. The firſt conſtitutes what may be called the Negative, and the ſecond the Poſitive Beauty of an apartment; and every apartment (conſidered only in relation to its Proportions, and without any reſpect to its End) will be beautiful in the ſame degree in which theſe Expreſſions are united, or in which the ſame Proportions that produce the appearance of perfect ſufficiency, agree alſo in maintaining the general character of the apartment.

When, however, the apartment is conſidered in relation to its End, the Beauty of its Proportions is determined in a great meaſure by their Expreſſion of Fitneſs for this End. To this, as to every other ſpecies of apartment, the Expreſſion of ſecurity is neceſſary, and ſuch an apartment will accordingly be beautiful, when theſe Expreſſions coincide.

The moſt perfect Beauty that the Proportions of an apartment can exhibit, will be when all theſe Expreſſions unite; or when the ſame relations of dimenſion which are productive of the Expreſſion of ſufficiency, agree alſo in the preſervation of Character, and in the indication of Uſe.

PART

PART III.

Of the INFLUENCE *of* UTILITY *upon the* BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

The third ſource of the RELATIVE Beauty of Forms, is UTILITY. That the Expreſſion of this quality is ſufficient to give Beauty to Forms, and that Forms of the moſt different and oppoſite kinds become beautiful from this Expreſſion, are facts which have often been obſerved, and which are within the reach of every perſon's obſervation. I ſhall not therefore preſume to add any illuſtrations on a ſubject, which has already been ſo beautifully illuſtrated by Mr. SMITH, in the moſt eloquent work * on the ſubject of MORALS, that Modern Europe has produced.

* Theory of Moral Sentiments.

SEC.

SECTION III.

Of the ACCIDENTAL BEAUTY *of* FORMS.

BESIDE the Expreſſions that have now been enumerated, and which conſtitute the two great and permanent ſources of the Beauty of Forms, there are others of a caſual or accidental kind, which have a very obſervable effect in producing the ſame Emotion in our minds, and which conſtitute what may be called the ACCIDENTAL Beauty of Forms. Such Aſſociations, inſtead of being common to all mankind, are peculiar to the individual. They take their riſe from education, from peculiar habits of thought, from ſituation, from profeſſion; and the Beauty they produce is felt only by thoſe whom ſimilar cauſes have led to the formation of ſimilar aſſociations. There are few men who have not aſſociations of this kind, with particular Forms, from their being familiar to them from their infancy, and thus connected with the gay and pleaſing imagery of that period of life; from their connection with ſcenes to which they look back with pleaſure; or people whoſe memories they love: and ſuch Forms, from this accidental connection, are never ſeen, without being in ſome meaſure the Signs of all thoſe affecting and endearing recollections.

lections. When ſuch aſſociations are of a more general kind, and are common to many individuals, they ſometimes acquire a ſuperiority over the more permanent principles of Beauty, and determine even for a time, the Taſte of nations. The admiration which is paid to the Forms of Architecture, of Furniture, of Ornament, which we derive from Antiquity, though undoubtedly very juſtly due to theſe Forms themſelves, originates in the greater part of mankind, from the aſſociations which they connect with theſe Forms. Theſe aſſociations, however, are merely accidental; and were theſe Forms much inferior in point of Beauty, the admiration which Modern Europe beſtows on them, would not be leſs enthuſiaſtic than it is now. There are even caſes where, in a few years, the Taſte of a nation, in ſuch reſpects, undergoes an abſolute change, from aſſociations of a different kind becoming general or faſhionable, and where the beautiful Form is always found to correſpond to the prevailing aſſociation. They who are learned in the Hiſtory of Dreſs, will recollect many inſtances of this kind. In every other ſpecies of ornament it is alſo obſervable. A ſingle inſtance will be ſufficient.

In the ſucceſſion of Faſhions which have taken place in the article of ornamental Furniture, within theſe few years, every one muſt have obſerved how much their Beauty has been determined by accidental aſſociations of this kind, and how little the real and permanent Beauty of ſuch Forms has been regarded. Some years ago, every article of this kind was made in what was called

called the CHINESE Taſte, and however fantaſtic and uncouth the Forms in reality were, they were yet univerſally admired, becauſe they brought to mind thoſe images of Eaſtern magnificence and ſplendour, of which we have heard ſo much, and which we are always willing to believe, becauſe they are diſtant. To this ſucceeded the GOTHIC Taſte. Every thing was now made in imitation, not indeed of Gothic Furniture, but in imitation of the Forms and ornament of Gothic Halls and Cathedrals. This ſlight aſſociation, however, was ſufficient to give Beauty to ſuch Forms, becauſe it led to ideas of Gothic manners and adventure, which had become faſhionable in the world, for many beautiful Compoſitions both in Proſe and Verſe. The Taſte which now reigns is that of the ANTIQUE. Every thing we now uſe, is made in imitation of thoſe models which have been lately diſcovered in Italy; and they ſerve in the ſame manner to occupy our imagination, by leading to thoſe recollections of Grecian or Roman Taſte, which have ſo much the poſſeſſion of of our minds, from the ſtudies and amuſements of our youth.

I ſhall only further obſerve upon this ſubject, that all ſuch inſtances of the effect of accidental Expreſſion, in beſtowing a temporary Beauty upon Forms, conclude immediately againſt the doctrine of their abſolute or independent Beauty; and that they afford a very ſtrong preſumption, if not a direct proof, that their permanent Beauty ariſes alſo from the Expreſſions they permanently convey to us.

From

From the illuſtrations that I have offered in this long chapter, on the Beauty of FORMS, we ſeem to have ſufficient reaſon for concluding in general, that no Forms, or ſpecies of Forms, are in themſelves originally beautiful; but that their Beauty in all caſes ariſes from their being expreſſive to us of ſome pleaſing or affecting Qualities.

If the views alſo that I have preſented on the ſubject are juſt, we may perhaps ſtill farther conclude, that the principal ſources of the Beauty of Forms are, 1*ſt*, The Expreſſions we connect with peculiar Forms, either from the Form itſelf, or the nature of the ſubject thus formed. 2*dly*, The qualities of Deſign, and Fitneſs, and Utility which they indicate: And, 3*dly*, The accidental Aſſociations which we happen to connect with them. The conſideration of theſe different Expreſſions may afford perhaps ſome general rules, that may not be without their uſe, to thoſe Arts that are employed in the production of Beauty.

All Forms are either ORNAMENTAL or USEFUL.

I. The Beauty of merely ORNAMENTAL Forms appears to ariſe from three ſources.

1. From the Expreſſion of the Form itſelf.

2. From the Expreſſion of Deſign.

3. From Accidental Expreſſion.

The

The real and poſitive Beauty, therefore, of every Ornamental Form, will be in proportion to the nature and the permanence of the Expreſſion by which it is diſtinguiſhed. The ſtrongeſt and moſt permanent Emotion, however, we can receive from ſuch Expreſſions, is that which ariſes from the nature of the Form itſelf. The Emotion we receive from the Expreſſion of Deſign, as I have already ſhewn, is neither ſo ſtrong nor ſo permanent; and that which accidental Aſſociations produce, periſhes often with the year which gave it birth. The Beauty of accidental Expreſſion, is as variable as the caprice or fancy of mankind. The Beauty of the Expreſſion of Deſign, varies with every period of Art. The Beauty which ariſes from the Expreſſion of Form itſelf, is alone permanent, as founded upon the uniform conſtitution of the human mind. Conſidering therefore the Beauty of Forms as conſtituted by the degree and the permanence of their Expreſſion, the following concluſions ſeem immediately to ſuggeſt themſelves:

1. That the greateſt Beauty which Ornamental Forms can receive, will be that which ariſes from the Expreſſion of the Form itſelf.

2. That the next will be that which ariſes from the Expreſſion of Deſign or Skill. And,

3. That the leaſt will be that which ariſes from accidental or temporary Expreſſion.

In all thoſe Arts, therefore, that reſpect the Beauty of Form, it ought to be the unceaſing

ſtudy

ſtudy of the Artiſt, to diſengage his mind from the accidental Aſſociations of his age, as well as the common prejudices of his Art; to labour to diſtinguiſh his productions by that pure and permanent expreſſion, which may be felt in every age; and to diſdain to borrow a tranſitory fame, by yielding to the temporary caprices of his time, or by exhibiting only the diſplay of his own dexterity or ſkill. Or if the accidental Taſte of mankind muſt be gratified, it is ſtill to be remembered, that it is only in thoſe Arts, which are employed upon periſhable ſubjects, that it can be gratified with ſafety; that in thoſe greater productions of Art, which are deſtined to laſt for centuries, the fame of the Artiſt muſt altogether depend upon the permanence of the Expreſſion, which he can communicate to his work; and that the only Expreſſion which is thus permanent, and which can awaken the admiration of every ſucceeding age, is that which ariſes from the Nature of Form itſelf, and which is founded upon the uniform conſtitution of Man and of Nature.

II. The Beauty of USEFUL Forms, ariſes either from the Expreſſion of Fitneſs, or of Utility.

With regard to this ſpecies of Beauty, it is neceſſary at preſent only to obſerve, 1*ſt*, That it is in itſelf productive of a much weaker Emotion, than that which ariſes from the different ſources of ornamental Beauty; but, 2*d*, That this Emotion is of a more conſtant and permanent kind, and much more uniformly fitted to excite the admiration of mankind.

To unite theſe different kinds of Beauty; to dignify Ornamental Forms alſo by Uſe, and to raiſe merely Uſeful Forms into Beauty, is the great object of ambition among every claſs of Artiſts. Wherever both theſe objects can be attained, the greateſt poſſible Beauty that Form can receive, will be produced; but as this can very ſeldom be the caſe, the following rules ſeem immediately to preſent themſelves, for the direction of the Artiſt.

1. That where the Utility of Forms is equal, that will be the moſt beautiful to which the moſt pleaſing Expreſſion of Form is given.

2. That when thoſe Expreſſions are at variance, when the Utility of the Form cannot be produced, without ſacrificing its natural Beauty, or when this beauty of Form cannot be preſerved without ſacrificing its utility, that Form will be moſt univerſally and moſt permanently beautiful, in which the Expreſſion of Utility is moſt fully preſerved.

To human Art indeed, this union will always be difficult, and often impoſſible; and the Artiſt, whatever may be his genius, muſt be content to ſuffer that Sublime diſtreſs, which a great mind alone can feel, "to dedicate his life to the "attainment of an ideal Beauty, and to die at "laſt without attaining it *." Yet, if it is painful to us to feel the limits that are thus impoſed to the invention of Man, it is ſtill more pleaſing to us, from the narrow ſchools of human Art, to

* Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

to turn our regard to the great ſchool of Nature, and to obſerve the ſtupendous wiſdom with which theſe Expreſſions are united in almoſt every Form. " And here I, think," ſays Mr. HOGARTH, " will be the proper place to ſpeak " of a moſt curious difference between the living " machines of Nature in reſpect of Fitneſs, and " ſuch poor ones in compariſon with them, as " men are only capable of making. A Clock, " by the Government's order has been made by " Mr. HARRISON for the keeping of true time at " ſea; which is perhaps one of the moſt exqui- " ſite movements ever made. Happy the inge- " nious Contriver! although the Form of the " whole, or of every part of this curious Ma- " chine ſhould be ever ſo confuſed, or diſpleaſ- " ingly ſhaped to the eye, and although even its " movements ſhould be diſagreeable to look at, " provided it anſwers the end propoſed: an or- " namental compoſition was no part of his " ſcheme, otherwiſe than as a poliſh might be " neceſſary; if ornaments are required to be add- " ed to mend its ſhape, care muſt be taken " that they are no obſtruction to the movement " itſelf, and the more as they would be ſuper- " fluous as to the main deſign. But, in Na- " ture's machines, how wonderfully do we ſee " Beauty and Uſe go hand in hand! Had a Ma- " chine for this purpoſe been Nature's work, the " whole and every individual part might have " had exquiſite Beauty of Form, without danger " of deſtroying the exquiſiteneſs of its motion, " even as if ornament had been the ſole aim; " its movements too might have been graceful " without one ſuperfluous title added for either

" of theſe lovely purpoſes. Now this is that cu-
" rious difference between the Fitneſs of Na-
" ture's Machines, and thoſe made by mortal
" hands."

The application of this fine obſervation, to innumerable inſtances both of inanimate and animated Forms, it is in the power of every one to make; and, I am much more willing to leave the impreſſion which it muſt make upon every mind entire, than to weaken it by any illuſtrations of my own.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

Of the BEAUTY *and* SUBLIMITY *of* MOTION.

MOTION is in many caſes productive of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty. With this quality, accordingly, we have many intereſting and affecting Aſſociations. Theſe Aſſociations ariſe either from the nature of Motion itſelf, or from the nature of the bodies moved. The following illuſtrations may perhaps ſhow, that the Beauty and Sublimity of Motion ariſes from theſe Aſſociations, and that we have no reaſon to believe, that this quality of Matter, is in itſelf either beautiful or ſublime.

I.

All Motion is produced either by viſible or inviſible power; by ſome cauſe which we perceive, or by ſome which is not the object of Senſe.

With all Motions of the latter kind, we connect the idea of voluntary Power; and ſuch Motions are in fact expreſſive to us of the exertion of Power. Whether this Aſſociation is the conſequence of Experience, or whether it is the effect of an original Principle, it is not at preſent material

material to enquire. The inſtance of children, and even of animals, who uniformly infer life, where they perceive Motion without any material cauſe, are ſufficient evidences of the fact.

That the Sublimity and Beauty of Motion ariſes from their Expreſſion of Power, ſeems to be evident from the two following conſiderations:

1. There is no inſtance where Motion, which is the apparent effect of Force, is beautiful or ſublime. It is impoſſible to conceive the Motion of a body that is dragged or viſibly impelled by another body, as either ſublime or beautiful.

2. All beautiful or ſublime Motion is expreſſed in language by verbs in the active voice. We ſay even in common language, that a torrent pours,—a ſtream glides,—a rivulet winds,—that lightning darts,—that light ſtreams.——Change theſe Expreſſions, by means of any verbs in the paſſive voice, and the whole Beauty of their Motion is deſtroyed. In poetical Compoſition, the ſame circumſtance is uniformly obſervable. If Motion were in itſelf beautiful or ſublime, or if any particular kinds of Motion were ſo, theſe circumſtances could not happen; and ſuch Motions would ſtil' be beautiful or ſublime, whether they were expreſſive of Power or not.

The character of Power varies according to its degree, and produces according to this difference,

ence, different Emotions in our mind. Great Power produces an Emotion of Awe and Admiration. Gentle or moderate, or diminutive Power, produces an Emotion of Tenderneſs, of Intereſt, of Affection. To every ſpecies of Power that is pleaſing, the idea of ſuperiority to obſtacle is neceſſary. All Power, whether great or ſmall, which is inferior to obſtacle, induces the idea of Imperfection, and is conſidered with a kind of diſſatisfaction.

Theſe conſiderations will probably explain a great part of the abſolute Sublimity and Beauty of Motion.

Motion differs according to its DEGREE, and according to its DIRECTION.

I. Of the DEGREE of MOTION. All Motion, when rapid, is, I apprehend, accompanied with the idea of great Power. When ſlow, on the other hand, with the idea of gentle or diminutive Power. For the truth of this remark, I muſt appeal to the Reader's own obſervation. Rapid Motion, accordingly, is ſublime, ſlow Motion beautiful.

II. Of the DIRECTION of MOTION. Motion is either in a ſtraight Line, in an angular Line, or in a ſerpentine or curvilinear Line.

1. Motion in a ſtraight Line chiefly derives its Expreſſion from its Degree. When rapid, it is ſimply ſublime: When ſlow, it is ſimply beautiful.

2. Motion

2. Motion in an angular Line, is expreſſive of Obſtruction, or of imperfect Power. When conſidered therefore in itſelf, and without relation to the body moving, it is ſimply unpleaſing.

3. Motion in Curves, is expreſſive of Eaſe, of Freedom, of Playfulneſs, and is conſequently beautiful.

The truth of this account of our Aſſociations with Motion, I refer to the examination of the Reader. The real Beauty and Sublimity of the different appearances of Motion, ſeem to me, to correſpond very accurately with the Expreſſions which the different combinations of the Degree, and the Direction of Motion, convey to us.

1. Rapid Motion, in a ſtraight line, is ſimply expreſſive of great Power. It is accordingly, in general, Sublime. Rapid Motion in angular Lines, is expreſſive of great, but of imperfect Power, of a power which every obſtacle is ſufficient to overcome. I believe, that Motion of this kind, is accordingly very ſeldom Sublime. Rapid Motion in curve Lines is expreſſive of great Power, united with Eaſe, Freedom, or Playfulneſs. Motion of this kind accordingly, though more Sublime than the preceding, is leſs Sublime than the firſt ſpecies of Motion. The courſe of a Torrent, when in a ſtraight Line, is more ſublime, than when it winds into Curves, and much more ſublime than when it is broken into Angles. The impetuous ſhooting of the Eagle

Eagle would loſe much of its ſublimity, if it were to deviate from the ſtraight Line, and would be ſimply painful, if it were to degenerate into an angular Line.

2. Slow Motion in a ſtraight Line, is ſimply expreſſive of gentle and delicate Power. It is accordingly beautiful. Slow Motion in angular Lines, is expreſſive of gentle Power, and of imperfection or obſtruction. Theſe expreſſions, however, do not well accord, and mutually deſtroy each other. Motion of this kind, is, accordingly, very ſeldom beautiful. Slow Motion in Curves, is expreſſive of gentle Power, united with Eaſe, Freedom, and Playfulneſs. It is accordingly peculiarly beautiful. The ſoft gliding of a Stream, the light traces of a ſummer Breeze upon a field of corn, are beautiful when in a ſtraight Line; they are much more beautiful when they deſcribe ſerpentine or winding Lines: but they are ſcarcely beautiful, when their direction is in ſharp angles, and ſudden deviations.

The moſt ſublime Motion, is that of rapid Motion in a ſtraight Line. The moſt beautiful, is that of ſlow Motion in a line of Curves. I humbly apprehend, that theſe concluſions are not very diſtant from common experience upon this ſubject.

II. Beſides

II.

Beſides theſe, however, which may be called the permanent Expreſſions of Motion, there are others which ariſe from the nature of the bodies moved, and which have a very obvious effect in giving Beauty or Sublimity to the peculiar Motions by which they are diſtinguiſhed. Inſtances of this kind are ſo familiar, that it will be neceſſary only to point out a few.

Slow Motion, is, in general, ſimply beautiful. Where however, the body is of great magnitude, ſlow Motion is ſublime. The ſlow Motion of a firſt rate Man of War; the ſlow aſcent of a great Balloon; the ſlow March of an embattled Army, are all ſublime Motions, and no perſon can obſerve

> The cloud ſtupendous, from th' Atlantic wave,
> High tow'ring ſail along th' horizon blue,

without an Emotion of this kind.

Rapid Motion is in general Sublime, yet where the bodies excite only pleaſing or moderate affections, Motion of this kind becomes beautiful. The rapid ſhooting of the Aurora Borealis, the quick aſcent of Fire-works, a ſudden ſtream of light from a ſmall luminous object in the dark, are familiar inſtances of this

this kind. The Motion of the humming Bird is more rapid perhaps than that of the Eagle, yet the Motion of the humming Bird is only beautiful.

Motion in angular Lines, is in general productive of an Emotion of diſcontent, rather than of any Emotion either of Sublimity or Beauty. Yet the Motion of Lightning, which is commonly of this kind, is ſtrikingly Sublime. The ſame appearance in electrical Experiments, is beautiful.

Slow Motion in waving Lines, is in general the moſt beautiful of all. But the Motion of Snakes or of Serpents, is of all others the moſt diſagreeable and painful.

In theſe inſtances, and many others that might be mentioned, it is obvious, that the Sublimity or Beauty of the Motion ariſes from the Expreſſion or Character of the Bodies moved, and that in ſuch caſes, the Expreſſion of the Body predominates over the general Expreſſion which we aſſociate with the Motion by which it is diſtinguiſhed.

From the facts I have mentioned, we may conclude:

1*ſt*, That the Beauty and Sublimity of Motion ariſes from the Aſſociations we connect either with the Motion itſelf, or with the Bodies moved. And,

2*dly*,

2*dly*, That this Sublimity or Beauty, in any particular caſe will be moſt perfect, when the Expreſſion of the Motion, and that of the Body moved, coincide.

CONCLUSION.

The illuſtrations that have been offered in the courſe of this ESSAY on the Origin of the SUBLIMITY and BEAUTY of ſome of the principal Qualities of MATTER, ſeem to afford us ſufficient evidence, for the following concluſions:

I. That with each of theſe qualities, we have ſome pleaſing or affecting Aſſociation; and,

II. That when theſe Aſſociations are diſſolved, or in other words, when the Material Qualities ceaſe to be ſignificant of the Aſſociated Qualities, they ceaſe alſo to produce the Emotions of Sublimity or Beauty.

If theſe points are eſtabliſhed, it appears neceſſarily to follow, that the Beauty and Sublimity of ſuch objects, is to be aſcribed not to the Material, but to the Aſſociated Qualities; and of conſequence, that the Qualities of Matter are not to be conſidered as ſublime or beautiful in themſelves, but as either ſublime or beautiful from their being the Signs or Expreſſions of qualities capable of producing Emotion.

The

The opinion I have now ſtated, coincides, in a great degree, with a DOCTRINE that appears very early to have diſtinguiſhed the PLATONIC School; which has been maintained in this country by ſeveral Writers of eminence, by Lord SHAFTESBURY, Dr. HUTCHESON, Dr. AKENSIDE, and Dr. SPENCE; and which has of late been ſupported by Dr. REID, in his ESSAYS ON THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF MAN; a Work, in which, by a ſucceſsful application of the true principles of philoſophical Inquiry to the Theory of the human Mind, he has contributed more than any of his Predeceſſors, to illuſtrate that important Science. The doctrine, I mean, is, that Matter is not beautiful in itſelf, but derives its Beauty from the Expreſſion of MIND.

If by this doctrine it is only meant, that MATTER is not beautiful in itſelf, without reference to MIND; and that its Beauty ariſes from the Expreſſions which an intelligent Mind connects with, and perceives in it, I readily agree to it; and perhaps the preceding illuſtrations may afford it ſome farther confirmation, by pointing out, more minutely than has hitherto been done, ſome of the principal claſſes of theſe Expreſſions.

But if it is further meant, that MATTER is beautiful only, by being expreſſive of the proper Qualities of MIND, and that all the Beauty of the MATERIAL, as well as of the INTELLECTUAL World, is to be found in Mind and its QUALITIES alone, there ſeems ſome reaſon for heſitation before we admit this concluſion. That the only

only SUBJECTS of our knowledge are Matter and Mind, cannot be denied; but it does not follow, that all the QUALITIES with which we are acquainted, muſt be the proper Qualities either of Body or of Mind. There are a number of Qualities which ariſe from RELATION; from the relation of different bodies or parts of bodies to each other; from the relation of Body to Mind; and from the relation of different Qualities of Mind to each other, that are as much the objects of our knowledge, and as frequently the objects of our attention, as any of the proper qualities either of Body or Mind. Many qualities alſo of this kind, are productive of Emotion. Thus, that Quality which we call NOVELTY, or the peculiar relation of an object, to the Mind to which it is new: that Quality which we call HARMONY, in every ſpecies of Compoſition; or the proper correſpondence of every individual part, to the production of the general effect: FITNESS, or the proper relation of Means to an End; UTILITY, or the relation of objects to the Convenience or Happineſs of Man, &c. although the proper Qualities neither of Body nor of Mind, are yet capable of affecting us with very ſtrong Emotions, and are undoubtedly very common ſources of Beauty in the Material World.

Inſtead therefore of concluding, that the BEAUTY and SUBLIMITY of MATTER ariſes from the EXPRESSION of the QUALITIES OF MIND, we ſhall reſt, in a more humble, but, as I apprehend, a more definite concluſion.

THAT

THAT THE BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY OF THE QUALITIES OF MATTER, ARISE FROM THEIR BEING THE SIGNS OR EXPRESSIONS OF SUCH QUALITIES AS ARE FITTED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR NATURE, TO PRODUCE EMOTION.

The illuſtrations in the ſecond chapter of the FIRST ESSAY, are intended to ſhow, that no Objects or Qualities in Objects, are felt either as beautiful or ſublime, but ſuch as are productive of ſome SIMPLE EMOTION.

The illuſtrations in the SECOND ESSAY, are intended to ſhow, that all the various Qualities of MATTER, are beautiful or ſublime only, from being expreſſive of Qualities capable of producing Emotion.

If theſe illuſtrations are juſt, we ſeem to have ſufficient reaſon for this general concluſion, THAT NO OTHER QUALITIES ARE FITTED TO PRODUCE THE EMOTIONS OF SUBLIMITY AND BEAUTY, BUT SUCH AS ARE PRODUCTIVE OF SOME SIMPLE EMOTION.

It is here, however, that the moſt important difficulty in the Science of Taſte ariſes. Although no other qualities are productive of the Emotions of Taſte, but thoſe that are productive of Simple Emotion, we yet every day perceive, that the Qualities that are permanently productive of Simple Emotion, are not as permanently productive of the Emotions of Taſte. There is an eſſential diſtinction therefore between the nature of theſe Qualities; and whether in Science or in Art, the accuracy

accuracy of our conception of the nature of the Qualities that produce the Emotions of TASTE, will depend upon the preciſion with which we can diſtinguiſh them from thoſe that are productive only of the SIMPLE EMOTIONS of PLEASURE.

The illuſtration of this important fact; the inveſtigation of this diſtinction; and the application of it, to the different Arts of TASTE, will form the SECOND PART of theſe INQUIRIES.

THE END.